



Strategic and Technical Planning Committee

Date: Monday, 8th September 2025
Time: 10.00 am
Venue: Council Chamber, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ

Members (Quorum 6)

Duncan Sowry-House (Chair), Dave Bolwell (Vice-Chair), Belinda Bawden, Matt Bell, Toni Coombs, Richard Crabb, Spencer Flower, Craig Monks, Belinda Ridout, Pete Roper, David Taylor and David Tooke

Chief Executive: Catherine Howe, County Hall, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1XJ

For more information about this agenda please contact Democratic Services Meeting Contact 01305 224709 - megan.r.rochester@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting, apart from any items listed in the exempt part of this agenda. If you would like to attend this meeting and have any specific requirements, please contact the Democratic Services Officer named above.

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Agenda

Item	Pages
1. APOLOGIES	
To receive any apologies for absence.	
2. MINUTES	
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 30 th June 2025.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To disclose any pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests as set out in the adopted Code of Conduct. In making their disclosure councillors are asked to state the agenda item, the nature of the	

interest and any action they propose to take as part of their declaration.

If required, further advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

4. REGISTRATION FOR PUBLIC SPEAKING AND STATEMENTS

Members of the public wishing to speak to the Committee on a planning application should notify the Democratic Services Officer listed on the front of this agenda. This must be done no later than two clear working days before the meeting. Please refer to the Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee. [Guide to Public Speaking at Planning Committee](#)

The deadline for notifying a request to speak is 8.30am on Thursday 4th September 2025.

5. P/FUL/2023/04753, P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761 - WOODSFORD QUARRY, WOODSFORD, DORCHESTER, DT2 8AZ 5 - 120

P/FUL/2023/04753: Extension to Woodsford Quarry for the winning and working of sand and gravel with restoration to agriculture, waterbodies and wetlands for nature conservation.

P/VOC/2023/04760: Mineral extraction and progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland including the erection of a processing plant, concrete batching plant, workshop, office and weighbridge (with variation of Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 to revise the approved phasing of working, extend the duration of the development and allow importation of mineral and processing of mineral from extension site); &

P/VOC/2023/04761: Formation of silt lagoons to serve existing processing plant at Woodsford Quarry with site restoration to agricultural use (Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648) as upheld at appeal for non-determination (appeal reference APP/D1265/W/19/3232596) (with variation of Condition Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 to extend the duration of the development and associated scheme submission dates).

6. P/FUL/2023/03982 - LAND AT HURST FARM AND STATION ROAD, MORETON, DORCHESTER, DT2 8RA 121 - 236

Extraction of approximately 11.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel, in phased working, together with importation of aggregates and cement, construction of a car park, internal haul road, bridged conveyor crossing, erection of a site office, aggregate processing plant, aggregate bagging plant, ready mix concrete plant, and ancillary buildings. Restoration to water bodies and agriculture and biodiversity enhancements together with public access and use of retained site office as a Visitor Centre.

7. URGENT ITEMS

To consider any items of business which the Chairman has had prior notification and considers to be urgent pursuant to section 100B (4) b) of the Local Government Act 1972. The reason for the urgency shall be recorded in the minutes.

8. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To move the exclusion of the press and the public for the following item in view of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of schedule 12 A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The public and the press will be asked to leave the meeting whilst the item of business is considered.

There are no exempt items scheduled for this meeting.

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Reference Nos: P/FUL/2023/04753, P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761			
Site Address: Woodsford Quarry, Woodsford, Dorchester, DT2 8AZ			
Proposal: <u>P/FUL/2023/04753</u> : Extension to Woodsford Quarry for the winning and working of sand and gravel with restoration to agriculture, waterbodies and wetlands for nature conservation; <u>P/VOC/2023/04760</u> : Mineral extraction and progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland including the erection of a processing plant, concrete batching plant, workshop, office and weighbridge (with variation of Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 to revise the approved phasing of working, extend the duration of the development and allow importation of mineral and processing of mineral from extension site); & <u>P/VOC/2023/04761</u> : Formation of silt lagoons to serve existing processing plant at Woodsford Quarry with site restoration to agricultural use (Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648) as upheld at appeal for non-determination (appeal reference APP/D1265/W/19/3232596) (with variation of Condition Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 to extend the duration of the development and associated scheme submission dates).			
Address: Woodsford Quarry, Woodsford, Dorchester, DT2 8AZ			
Recommendation: Refuse Planning Permission (All three Applications)			
Case Officer: Andrew Sierakowski			
Ward Member(s): Cllr Tarr			
Publicity expiry date:	2 nd December 2023	Officer site visit dates:	5 th February 2024, 30 th October 2024, and 17 th March 2025
Decision due date:	30th September 2025	Ext(s) of time:	30th September 2025

1.0 The application is being considered by the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee as it is a major planning application.

2.0 Summary of the Recommendation

2.1 REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION for the following reasons:

Application Number: P/FUL/2023/04753

1. The Application has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment

and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and in turn that it would not have unacceptable impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policies SS1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), DM1 (Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development), Policies INT1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), ENV2 (Wildlife and Habitats) and Policy ENV3 (Green Infrastructure Network) and ENV 9 (Pollution and Contaminated Land) of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), Policies DM3 (Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources) and DM5 (Biodiversity and Geological Interest) of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014). It is also contrary to the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (2019), Policy MS-1 and specifically Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) paragraphs 187 and 193.

2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of the application, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (2019), Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Application Number: P/VOC/2023/04760

1. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there is no reasoned justification for the approval of the proposed revision of the approved phasing of working, extension of the duration of the development and importation of mineral and processing of mineral from proposed north-eastern extension, and the consequential delay in the restoration and aftercare of the site, contrary to Policy RS1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), Policy RS1 and paragraph 224 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), which seek to ensure restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity.
2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the

approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Application Number: P/VOC/2023/04761

1. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there is no reasoned justification for the approval of the proposed extension of the duration of the development and associated scheme submission dates, contrary to Policy RS1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), Policy RS1 and paragraph 224 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), which seek to ensure restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity.
2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

2.1 Reason for the Recommendation

2.2 As set out in the conclusions of this report, the reasons for this recommendation can be summarised as:

- The principle of mineral extraction on the site is supported by the allocation of the sites in the Minerals Sites Plan (MSP) (2019).
- The proposed north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry would make a significant contribution to the supply of sand and gravel in the county, and in particular building sand. The approval of the proposal would increase the landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves and would thus reduce the long-term need to permit extraction on other sites.
- The NPPF advises that *“great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy.”*
- It is considered that the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry would not have an unacceptable impact on amenity, the landscape, or highway safety and capacity.

- The loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land is on balance acceptable, and the classification of the land was known at the time of the site's allocation.
- The site is proposed to be restored to waterbodies and agriculture, with notable increases in biodiversity.
- The Application for the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry has failed to demonstrate that the development would not have an adverse impact on the water environment and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and in turn that it would not have an unacceptable impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI.
- The proposal for the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry is broadly compliant with the development guidelines for the allocation in the MSP, as well as the development management policies in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (MS) (2014), with the exception of DM1 (Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development), Policy DM3 (Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources) and DM5 (Biodiversity and Geological Interest) of the MS, and the MSP, Policy MS-1 and specifically Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii.
- The proposal for the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM7 of the MS, and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.
- There is no reasoned justification for the approval of the two s.73 applications that would seek to amend the permissions for the existing quarry to extend the duration of the development and associated scheme submission dates, contrary to Policy RS1 of the MS, Policy RS1 and paragraph 224 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), which seek to ensure restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity.
- Approval of the two s.73 applications would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and they cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the MS, and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

3.0 Key Planning Issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of Development	The development of the north eastern extension (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753) is acceptable in principle and is supported by the allocation of the sites in the MSP. Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761, are also acceptable in principle, but their acceptability in relation to the extension of the end dates of the two permission depends upon the acceptability of north eastern extension (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753), both in terms of the principle and in relation to the environmental impacts of the proposal. If the proposal for the north eastern extension is not acceptable and is not approved then the justification for the approval of Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761 falls away, and all three applications should be refused.
Impact on the Water Environment	The main issue in relation to the impact of the development on the water environment relates to the proposed north eastern extension (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753). The Environment Agency has advised that the information included as part of the Environmental Statement submitted with the planning application does not adequately demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impacts on the water environment, notably the River Frome SSSI, and the associated impacts on fisheries and biodiversity and also the adjacent Hurst Heath SNCI. Consequently it has to be considered not to be compliant with the MSP, Policy MS-1 as it does not meeting all the criteria set out in Part C an in particular Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. The proposal can similarly and for the same reasons be considered to be contrary to West Dorset,

	Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV9 and the MS, Policy DM3 and the NPPF, paragraph 187.
Loss of BMV Agricultural Land	The main issue, relates to the impact in terms of the loss BMV agricultural withing the proposed north-eastern extension (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753). Whilst the development would result in the loss of 43.3 ha of BMV land, which would be large and significant, the proposed restoration of the site is consistent with the Development Guidelines for the site out in the MSP, which recognises that for restoration to agriculture without importation of inert wastes, limits the scope of the restoration to agriculture on the one hand, and on the other promotes a large scale wetland restoration scheme that is hydrologically connected to the River Frome. This being the case the application cannot be considered anything other than consistent with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policies DM1 and RS1 of the MS, and paragraph 187 of the NPPF. Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761 would not result in additional loss of BMV land, although there would delay in the final restoration of parts of the existing of the existing quarry site.
Impacts on Heritage	The main issue in heritage concerns the impact on the setting of Woodsford Castle, which is a Grade 1 listed building. Both Historic England and the Landmark Trust, which owns the castle, have expressed concern, primarily about impact of the extension of the end date of the two existing consents sought by the two s.73 applications (Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761) for the existing quarry and proposed silt lagoons. If approved these would extend the end date of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 permissions from 1st October 2029 to 31st October 2046, i.e. an extension of the end date of seventeen years, and the end date of Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 from 1st October 2028 to 30th June 2033, i.e. an extension of the end date of almost five years. The two applications if approved would result in a delay in the restoration of parts of the site by up to seventeen years, and particularly of the

	area where the plant and the silt lagoons are located, which include the areas closest to Woodsford Castle. Whilst this would not increase the adverse impact on the setting of the castle, it would nevertheless extend the duration of the impact which would amount to less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle. This harm, in accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The issue for the Committee is whether the less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle and the other nearby heritage assets, is outweighed by the public benefit of the proposal. The advice is that in the context of the need for the supply of mineral identified in the MS, the application would not only develop one of the seven allocated sites to meet the identified shortfall in permitted reserves required during the Plan period to the end of 2028, but that this development alone represents almost one-third the total additional amount of mineral required to meet the shortfall in sand and gravel identified in the MSP, i.e. just under 3 million tonnes of the identified shortfall of 9.36 Mt required over the plan period to 2028. This can be considered to amount to significant public benefit, and it can therefore be attributed sufficient weight that outweighs the less than substantial harm to the setting of the affected heritage assets, i.e. Woodsford Castle and the other nearby heritage assets. However, in the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, because the Application has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM7 of the MS, and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF. This also then applies in relation to the two s.73 applications.
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Impact on Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use	The key issue, in relation to all three applications, in terms of the impacts on the landscape and landscape features is that the proposed working would involve the cessation of working within the existing quarry while the north eastern extension is worked, before working switches back to the existing quarry to enable the construction of the additional silt lagoon, and then temporarily back to the north-eastern extension, before final restoration takes place in the existing quarry. As result the phased restoration of the existing quarry would be held over until after the working of the north-eastern extension is completed. This approach has had to be adopted because it is proposed that the processing of the mineral from the north eastern extension is to be undertaken within the existing plant area at the western end of the existing quarry, and because as set out above the further extension of the quarry will necessitate the development of an additional silt lagoon to manage the additional amount of mineral that will be extracted. Whilst this will necessitate a not insignificant extension of the end date on the permission for the main existing quarry permission, Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742, of up to seventeen years, the advice to the Committee is that this would not have an unacceptable impact on landscape. Whilst the advice is that the proposed restoration and aftercare proposal are acceptable the application says relatively little about the afteruse of the site. Whilst some of the land is to be returned to agricultural use and much of it will developed as wetland, there are few details of how it would actually provide “significant recreational opportunities” and how these would be accessed and managed. Whilst this is not enough in itself to justify refusal of the application, it is certainly an aspect of the proposals that is somewhat lacking beyond the details set out above. Notwithstanding this shortcoming, the proposal can in overall terms be considered to be in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM4 of the MS (2014), and paragraphs 187 and 224 of the NPPF.
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Traffic and Highway Safety	The key issues in relation to traffic and highway safety relate to whether the development of the proposed extension would give rise to any significant increases in traffic and any consequential highway safety impacts including any capacity related considerations. The advice to the Committee is that with the extension of quarry, output from the quarry will continue at the existing rate resulting in no material increase in traffic flows on the adjacent highway network and that it will have no material impact on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network and that the existing highway infrastructure is adequate for the forecast traffic flows. The development would therefore not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and capacity.
Amenity (Noise, Vibration, Air Quality, Dust, and Lighting)	The key issues in relation to amenity concern noise, dust and light, particularly in relation to the nearest residential properties, but also more widely in relation to the surrounding area because of the potential impact of off-site HGV movements. There are no reasons to consider that the proposed north eastern extension to Woodsford quarry or either of the two s.73 applications would be unacceptable. There is therefore no reason to consider that the proposal are not compliant with MSP Policy DM2 and the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP, West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV16, or paragraphs 198 and 201 and 224 of the NPPF.
Impacts on Protected Species, Habitats and Biodiversity including Trees	The impacts on protected species, habitats and biodiversity, as a result of the proposed north eastern extension to Woodford Quarry is a significant issue with Natural England raising concerns related to those expressed by the Environment Agency about the potential impact of the development impact on the water environment and in particular the potential impact on the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). As a result, the application raises significant issues in relation to the impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI. The Environment Agency has made clear despite additional submissions by the applicant

	that this issue has not been adequately assessed or addressed and as such they have maintained their objection to the application. Natural England and the Council's Natural Environment Team have also made clear that they share the Environment Agency's concerns. Accordingly, the advice is that the Application has failed to demonstrate that the development would not have an adverse impact on the water environment and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI),
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4.0 Description of Site

- 4.1 This report deals with three concurrent applications at the existing Woodsford Quarry, at Woodsford, approximately 6km east of Dorchester. Of these, the main application is Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 for a north easterly extension to the existing quarry to allow for the winning and working of sand and gravel with restoration to agriculture, waterbodies and wetlands for nature conservation. In support of this, Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 is for a variation of Condition Nos 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 and is for a revision the approved phasing of working within the existing quarry, and an extension of the duration of the permission and to allow the import and processing of mineral from the proposed extension site. In addition, Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 is for a variation of Conditions No. 3, 5, 7 and 9 of Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 to extend the duration of the permission which was allowed the formation of the silt lagoons to serve the existing processing plant at Woodsford Quarry with restoration of the site to agriculture.
- 4.2 There are consequently three different application sites, which relate to three areas within and adjacent to the existing Woodsford Quarry as follows:
Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753
- 4.3 The Site comprises an irregular shaped area of 97.6ha located to the immediate north-east of the existing Woodsford Quarry, with the two nearest villages being Woodsford, approximately 350m west of the application site boundary and Crossways which is located approximately 1.25km south of the Site. Dorchester is located approximately 6km to the west.
- 4.4 Within the application site the area of extraction which would extend to 64.85ha is currently in agricultural arable use and divided into two parcels separated by Watery Lane. The area to the west of Watery Lane is largely a single field, with a small area of lower level land on its western boundary, which is surrounded by hedges which have been subject to recent supplementary planting.
- 4.5 The substantive part of the site to the east of Watery Lane comprises further agricultural land in irregular medium to large fields divided by hedgerows with a number of well-established trees. To the north and north east there is also

agricultural land which extends down to the River Frome. On the far bank of the River Frome to the north east there are a series of lakes which are former mineral workings. The lakes are in commercial use.

- 4.6 The eastern boundary of the application site has a narrow woodland strip, beyond which is further agricultural land, belonging to neighbouring landowner at Hurst Farm. The south-eastern boundary is marked by a substantial area of woodland, known as Hurst Heath. Along the length of the southern boundary a rural lane (the C33, West Gate Road) extends from the B3390 to Woodsford. The site is crossed by a 33kv overhead power line on pylons, one of which falls within the extraction area.
- 4.7 There are no Public Rights of Way within the site. A footpath does run outside the site from Woodsford Farm to the west along the northern boundary of the land to the west of Watery Lane, before reaching the public road at Frome Bridge. Additionally, the road on the southern boundary forms part of National Cycle Route 2.
- 4.8 Woodsford Lower Dairy, in the centre of the site, includes two residential properties and a collection of farm buildings. The properties are owned by the applicant, Woodsford Farms, on shorthold tenancies. Otherwise, the nearest residential properties are located at Woodsford Farm approximately 350m to the west. To the north, approximately 650m to 800m distant, beyond the River Frome there are residential properties on the road between Tincleton and Pallington. Crossways is the nearest village south of the site and beyond the Dorchester to Wareham railway line, approximately 1.2km away.
- 4.9 The application site comprises Allocated Site AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension, Woodsford, in the MSP.
- 4.10 The land adjoining the eastern boundary of the Site comprises a further MSP Allocated Site, AG6, Hurst Farm, and to the south of this Allocated Site AG5, Station Road. Just prior to the submission of the three current applications, a planning application was submitted, by a different applicant, for the development of these two areas for the extraction of sand and gravel. The relative position of the existing Woodsford Quarry, the proposed north eastern extension and the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites is shown In Figures and 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1 Woodsford Quarry, the proposed north eastern extension and the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites.

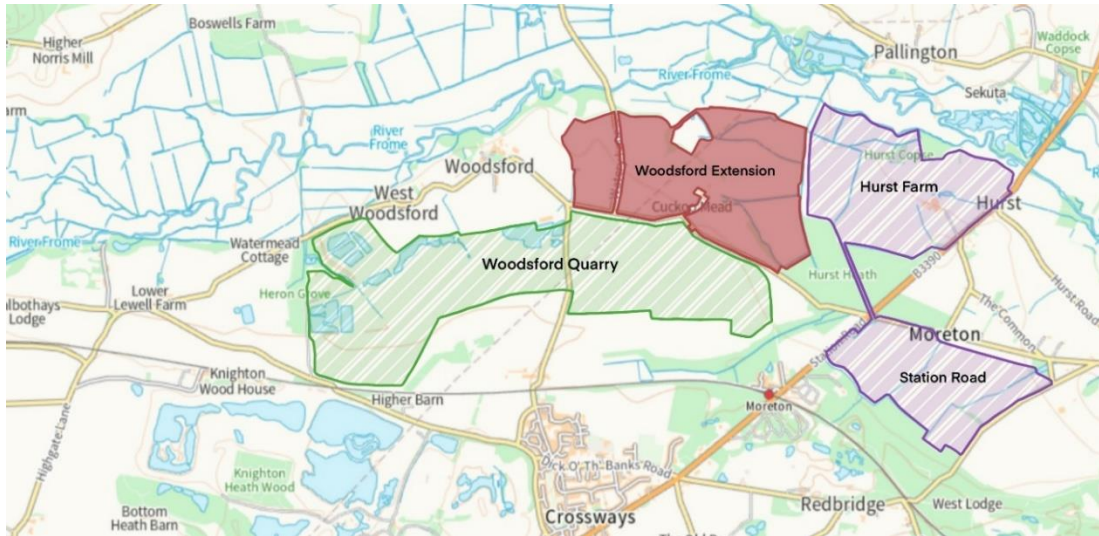
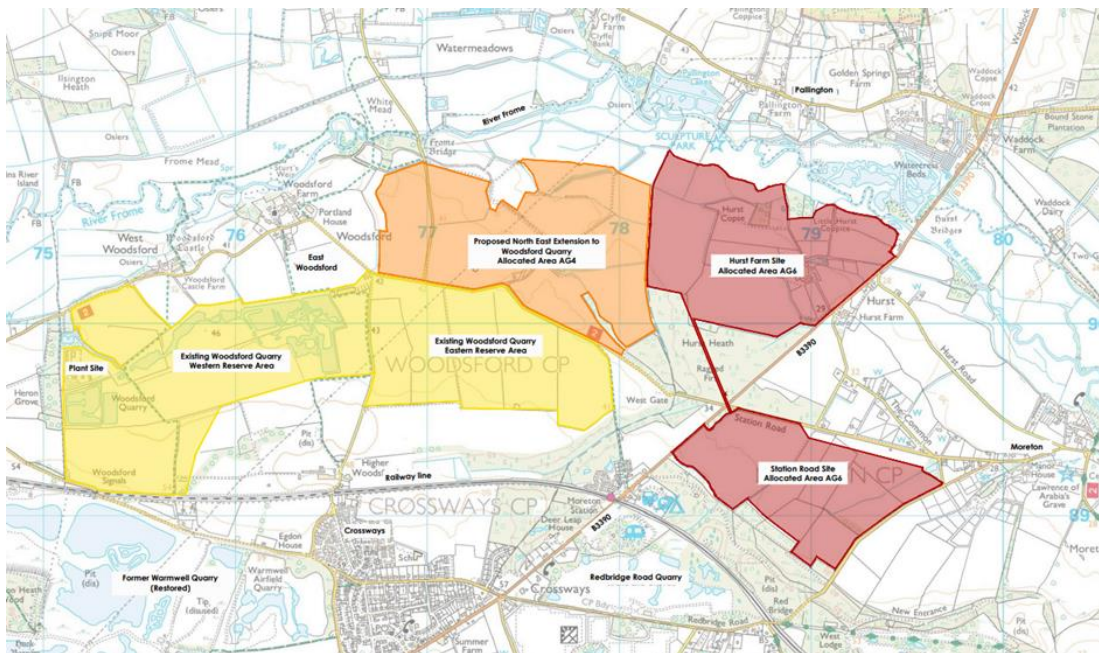


Figure 2 Woodsford Quarry, the proposed extension north eastern extension and the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites.



Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760

- 4.11 The site comprises what is broadly the 150ha of the existing Woodsford Quarry (other than the area included in Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 (detailed below)). It is located approximately 5km east of Dorchester, on the south side of the River Frome, the river itself being 600m north of the site, with Woodsford village being located 350m to the north and Crossways 600m to the south.

- 4.12 The Site extends over a distance of 2.85km east to west parallel to the river, and is about 500m wide. It is relatively flat and previously comprised agricultural land, in large fields with few 'internal' hedges and a limited number of trees.
- 4.13 On its southern edge the site is bounded by agricultural land and the Dorchester to Wareham railway line, whilst to the north the boundary is formed by the C33 West Stafford to Moreton road. The Woodsford to Crossways road runs north south through the site and effectively splits it into two equal parts.
- 4.14 The nearest dwellings are Watermead Cottage, 250m from the western boundary of the site, and properties in School Lane, Woodsford, the closest of which is 230m from the site. At the eastern end of the site, the isolated properties at Cuckoo Mead are approximately the same distance away but the closest are those properties on the south side of the site, at Higher Barn, which are 100m from the boundary, and separated from it by the railway line.
- 4.15 The site is located outside the Dorset National Landscape (formerly the Dorset AONB). There are no ecological designations within the site, although the River Frome and its banks are designated as an SSSI. The site was previously identified as a 'preferred area' for sand and gravel extraction in the former Dorset Minerals and Waste Local Plan (1999). There are two public footpaths crossing the site from north to south, Right of Way S60/4 and S60/6.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761

- 4.16 The Site comprises a broadly square area extending to 11.62ha, located to the north of the existing Woodsford Quarry plant area, and forms part of Woodsford Farm. It is located approximately 800m south-west of Woodsford, and 1.3km north west of Crossways with Dorchester located 5 km to the west. It was previously a relatively flat agricultural field enclosed by hedgerows. In the south western corner there is a 6.5m high soil bund, constructed from materials from the adjacent quarry, which has been planted with trees. Following the grant of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742, on appeal in November 2019, it has been developed as a silt lagoon.
- 4.17 There is a mature hedgerow to the north of the lagoon, beyond which the land drops down towards the road (the C33) leading to Woodsford Village. There is agricultural land to the east, whilst Woodsford Quarry lies to the south and south-west. Herons Grove which is deciduous native woodland, lies to the west.
- 4.18 A Public Right of Way (Right of Way S60/6) lies to the south of the Planning Application Area. The site is not subject to any environmental or landscape designations.
- 4.19 A list of nearby constraints is set out in Section 7 below.

5. The Proposals

Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753

- 5.1 The proposal is to develop a north easterly extension to the existing Woodsford Quarry, extracting approximately 3 million tonnes of mineral over 12 years. The site would be restored to a mix of farmland, wetland, lakes and with areas of increased ecological interest and biodiversity.

- 5.2 The land that is subject to this planning application forms part of Woodsford Farms, as does the existing quarry, which is being extracted by Hills Quarry Products Ltd.
- 5.3 The proposed mineral extraction operation in the extension area will take approximately 12 years to complete after the initial site preparation work has been completed and Phase 1 started, at an average production rate of 250,000 tonnes per annum.
- 5.4 Working would take place in nine phases starting in the north east corner of the site and then moving to the south east corner before moving to the north west corner and western side of the site and finishing in Phase 9 in the central southern part of the site, with phased restoration.
- 5.5 By way of background, Planning Permission Ref: 1/E/2005/0742 for Woodsford Quarry, was granted to Woodsford Farms in 2007. The existing quarry, as set out above, comprises an area of approximately 161 ha that extends over a distance of 2.85km to the south west of the proposed extension area. The existing permission(s) allow for the extraction and processing of mineral, progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland; and ancillary facilities including the processing plant, a concrete batching plant, an office, workshop and a weighbridge. There have been a number of revisions to the permission to allow, amongst other things, for the provision of an additional silt management lagoon. A bagging plant has also been installed under Permitted Development rights.
- 5.6 The extension area lies immediately to the north east of the existing consented reserve and in accordance with the allocation of the site in the MSP, it will be worked as an intermediate phase, before the completion of the primary Woodsford Quarry site. It is proposed that following grant of planning permission (and after any subsequent discharge of pre-commencement conditions and any associated works), that extraction in the existing quarry, where extraction is currently taking place at the eastern end of the site in what is referred to as the eastern reserve, will be paused and the current extraction area restored as far as reasonable whilst extraction will commence in the north eastern extension.
- 5.7 The infrastructure, i.e. the mineral processing plant, within the existing quarry will be utilised for processing the mineral extracted from north eastern extension as well as that from the final stages of the existing quarry after extraction in the north east extension has been completed. The extension will be linked to the plant site by the existing conveyor and an extension to the existing conveyor, and would be an extension to the current area and method of extraction. This will allow the extraction of the north eastern extension to be undertaken with material dug and loaded onto the conveyor, without the need for the installation of any additional processing plant.
- 5.8 To do this, additionally requires the submission of the two other Planning Applications, submitted concurrently with this application, further details of which are set out below. It is not intended that these would change the intrinsic nature of what has already been granted planning consent at Woodsford Quarry only that they would allow for an extension of time necessary to complete mineral extraction at Woodsford Quarry as a result of the north east

extension being worked as an intermediate phase, as a result of the pausing of extraction in the eastern reserve within the existing consented quarry. This has the related effect of requiring the plant site (including access and all associated infrastructure) to be retained for longer than was originally consented.

- 5.9 This extension of time would apply to the area of the existing silt lagoon, which, as set out above, is subject to a separate planning consent. The lagoon will receive silt generated by the north eastern extension mineral, although it will in turn also necessitate a revision to the approved phasing drawing of the existing quarry to accommodate the additional silt that will arise by the time both the existing consented reserve and the north eastern extension mineral reserve have been processed through the plant site.
- 5.10 Although the extension site requires no fixed plant installation (other than an extension to the existing conveyor), it will be linked to the consented site by a tunnel under the public highway, the C33. This will replicate the approved arrangements between the western and eastern areas of the existing quarry. In linking the north eastern extension site to the existing conveyor system, the conveyor will cross the road in the same tunnel that will be established for drainage from the eastern area as part of that consented working. A service road will also have access to the north eastern extension at this point.

Overview of Working

- 5.11 As set out above it is proposed that the north eastern extension is worked and restored progressively in nine phases. Common to all phases of extraction, all temporary topsoil storage mounds will be constructed to a maximum height of 3 metres and subsoil mounds to 5 metres. A mineral extraction standoff will be provided in each phase, to protect the existing surrounding hedgerows and trees, with the distance between the hedges retained on the field boundaries and the edge of extraction generally proposed to be 15m-20m, with the minimum standoff being 5m either side of the hedge between extraction Phases 7 and 9a. Soil storage mound standoffs are 5 metres minimum from internal hedges and those without hedgerow trees but would predominantly be 6m.
- 5.12 A significant feature of the proposed method of working is that all extraction areas will be dewatered by pumping out the groundwater through a water discharge system. Phase 1a is proposed as the first area of extraction, to create the settlement areas for water pumped from the extraction area, before it is discharged to a water course. Environment Agency (EA) consent is required for this and it is proposed that flocculant be used to ensure the requirements of the EA discharge permit are met with respect to suspended solids. The methods of water management and discharge are the same as those utilised at the existing quarry.
- 5.13 Minerals will normally be dug and taken by loader to the conveyor hopper and screen over distances usually no greater than 200 metres, but exceptions may arise. In some instances a 360° excavator and a dump truck may be used to transport the extracted mineral to the conveyor, for instance where in a corner where it would be impractical to install a spur conveyor within 200m.

- 5.14 The initial works will involve the stripping of soils and their retention for later use in the restoration of each phase. Following this the archaeological work will be undertaken before extraction of the mineral.
- 5.15 The initial soil stripping work will create perimeter bunds, with top soil and subsoil being stored separately. The perimeter bunds include 3m high bunds around the two residences at Woodsford Lower Dairy, providing screening for the residents.
- 5.16 The soil bunds will be constructed using an excavator to provide stable side batters and a convex top to allow surface water run-off. The bunds will be seeded with a low maintenance grass seed mix immediately following their construction and maintained to prevent the invasion of noxious weeds where they are in place for more than six months.
- 5.17 Once the initial bunds have been created and working moves into the second and subsequent phases, the intention is that there will be direct placement of soils from the next area being prepared for extraction, to the previous one undergoing restoration. Where this is not possible, the soils will be stored. No soils will be exported from the site.
- 5.18 There is one tree that will require removal and hedges will only be removed where necessary to accommodate the conveyor passing through a hedge and even then, with the flexibility of the conveyor, less dense spots in a hedge line will be chosen. The removal will be subject to ecological advice before work is to be undertaken and will avoid the bird breeding season unless an ecologist has reviewed the vegetation for nesting birds.
- 5.19 An Overhead Transmission Line crosses the site and there is a pylon supporting this within the development area. The existing quarry also has this feature and discussions with the utility provider (Asset Protection at the National Grid) are understood to have been undertaken to ensure appropriate working measures around the pylon, including a 1: 3 slope.
- 5.20 Once the conveyor tunnel into the site is completed and the site preparatory works are completed, the mineral in Phase 1a will be extracted and taken to the field screen. The screen will remove any clay or poor-quality mineral which will be returned to the quarry void for use in restoration, using the loading shovel.
- 5.21 The mineral will be transported to the existing plant site via the conveyor. The phased working of the site will progress as shown on the submitted phasing drawing, with the sequence of ecological investigation, soils stripping with archaeological input, mineral extraction and water management ahead of restoration work, followed by management of the restored land to ensure the aftercare of the planting and seeding.

The Working Scheme

- 5.22 Timings given below are broadly from the start date from preparatory works.
Phase 1a
- 5.23 As noted above, Phase 1a, will be extracted to create the water management area. Soils stripped from this phase will be used in perimeter bunding to the north east.

Phase 1b (estimated 11 months extraction)

- 5.24 A spur field conveyor will be constructed to the first extraction area starting with the northern edge of Phase 1b and working broadly south. Soils and overburden stripped from this phase will be used in perimeter bunding to the north east and around Woodsford Lower Dairy, as well as on the north eastern edge of Phase 9.
- 5.25 Restoration of this phase to a Lowland Fen/Pasture with scrapes will utilise soils and overburden generated from working the next phases of the quarry when they are removed so that they can be directly placed onto Phase 1b.

Phase 2 (estimated 5 months extraction)

- 5.26 Mineral extraction will commence at the west of Phase 2 and move north eastwards. Soils from Phase 2 will be used to progress restoration of Phase 1b area.

Phase 3 (estimated 12 months extraction)

- 5.27 Phase 3, on the northern boundary of extraction will be worked broadly from north to south, with materials generated from soil stripping and overburden removal adding to the restoration of Phase 2.

Phase 4 (estimated 14 months extraction)

- 5.28 Excavations within Phase 4 will proceed from east to west to east, as well as in the north west corner working south. Substantive amounts of soils from this area are not required for its restoration as it will be restored to a lake. The top soils stripped from this phase will therefore be stored in a bund on part of the northern perimeter of Phase 9. Subsoils will be directly placed into Phase 2 and a small amount into Phase 3.
- 5.29 On completion of Phase 4 it is estimated that the capacity of the silt lagoon within the existing quarry will have been nearly used up and therefore, working in the north east extension will be paused whilst extraction moves to the south west of the plant site, to what were originally going to be the three final three phases of the existing quarry of what are referred to in the application as the "Permitted South West Reserves and future silt management area".
- 5.30 The change of phasing to bring this area forward for extraction earlier and use it for silt is the subject of the accompanying Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 which has been submitted under Section 73 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 in parallel with the planning application for the north eastern extension of the quarry. There will by necessity need to be some flexibility in the timing of the delivery of the additional silt pond capacity as the rate of production of silt varies across different parts of the mineral reserve and is impacted by improvements in plant site equipment. When the south west reserves are extracted, working will re-commence in the north eastern extension.

Phase 5 (estimated 12 months extraction)

- 5.31 Mineral extraction will be from the south to the north, and in the later stages, from east to west. The soils removed from this area will be temporarily stored within the excavated void of Phase 4. Approximately 50% of the material

removed will be used directly in Phase 3. This is part of the build-up of materials that is needed to achieve the agricultural restoration in the later phases, because, as with Phase 5, this phase will be restored using only small amounts of soil on lake margins.

Phase 6 (estimated 16 months extraction)

- 5.32 Phase 6 will be worked in a similar direction to Phase 5, commencing at the southern end and working north. The removed soils will be temporarily stored within the excavated void of Phase 5. Restoration of Phase 6 will be to an angling lake.

Phase 7 (estimated 15 months extraction)

- 5.33 With the development of Phase 7, extraction will move into the northern part of the site and with working being undertaken from north to the south. Topsoil and overburden will be stored on the northern edge of Phase 7, and subsoil on the southern edge. Restoration of Phase 7 will be to a wildlife lake.

Phase 8 (estimated 23 months extraction)

- 5.34 Phase 8 lies to the west of Watery Lane and will be worked, (although not simultaneously) from the south and from the north, with a crossing point back to the main part of the site being established, most likely using either the existing or new agricultural access to the land on the east side of Watery Lane. The application states that the relatively small amount of mineral in this area, does not make it feasible to install a further tunnel to carry a conveyor, but equally the mineral should not be left unworked and potentially therefore sterilised.
- 5.35 All of the soils and overburden stripped from Phase 8 will be stored within the phase, with the majority being stored on the western side of the site. The western boundary of Phase 8 has been subject to recent additional planting. The restoration of Phase 8 will only use materials from the original field in the phase and has been designed to be restored to agricultural land and a wildlife lake.

Phase 9 (estimated 36 months extraction)

- 5.36 Phase 9 has been divided into areas a and b. Phase 9a will be worked from the margins towards the central conveyor end location. Soils will be temporarily stored within Phase 7, with additional direct placement of some top soil and subsoil on the margins of Phase 7 beyond the margins of the lake that will make up its final landform.
- 5.37 On the assumption that extraction in the NE Extension would commence in 2026/27, Phase 9a extraction would not commence until 2037/38. It is anticipated that additional mitigation will be added to the screening bunds, or that the two properties at Woodsford Lower Dairy would be temporarily vacated for the estimated 18 months that would be needed to complete extraction in close proximity to them.

Final Restoration

- 5.38 When Phase 9 extraction is completed, the mineral extraction will revert to the eastern reserve within the already consented quarry and the final mineral in

this area will be excavated. The restoration of the north eastern extension will be completed within 12 months including any additional planting and landscaping identified during the development of the Landscape and Ecological Management Plans (LEMPs) for each phase.

- 5.39 The final restoration of the planning application area would comprise:
- Fields (mostly land defined as 'best & most versatile') will be created within the south-western parts of the site;
 - Wildlife Lakes, including nesting islands;
 - Water bodies suitable for angling;
 - Lowland fen/pasture including scrapes which will be seasonally wet in the northern part of the site;
 - Reed / fen margin, marsh and wet grassland on the shallow edges of waterbodies;
 - Lowland meadow managed as a traditional hay-meadow, will be created on restoration slopes around the main water bodies and adjacent to the drainage channel south of Woodsford Lower Dairy; and
 - Blocks and belts of mixed broadleaved woodland will be created to add to and connect existing woodland areas and on restoration slopes.
- 5.40 The materials to achieve the restoration profile will be accumulated through the working, from surplus soils and overburden in earlier phases. There is no proposal to import inert waste to restore the site.

Management of Groundwater

- 5.41 Because a proportion of the mineral within the north eastern extension area lies beneath the water table, dewatering will be required. Groundwater monitoring has been undertaken within the area of the north eastern extension. This has shown that there is a clear seasonal trend, with maximum elevations occurring in January-March, followed by a decline throughout the summer months. As a result the volume of the ingress in summer is extremely small, or none, and will increase in the winter months in proportion to the saturated thickness of the mineral.
- 5.42 The average saturated thickness of the mineral in each phase has been determined by comparing the long-term average groundwater elevations with the maximum proposed depth of mineral extraction. This indicates that the average saturated thickness of mineral across the site in each phase varies from 1.5m to 4.0m.
- 5.43 Groundwater will be managed on a phase by phase basis with groundwater inflow being managed by excavating ditches into the floor of the quarry void in each phase to convey water to a sump. Water ingress to the quarry void will comprise both groundwater and rainfall.
- 5.44 A maximum of three phases within the north eastern extension will require active water management at any one time.
- 5.45 Water will be pumped from the sump to silt settlement/flow balancing ponds, which will be established initially in Phase 1a. The application states that the ponds will ensure that the water quality is acceptable for discharge and that the flow rates are regulated prior to discharge, which the application initially

stated would be into existing ditches to the east of the north eastern extension, which outfall to the River Frome. Flocculant dosing will be undertaken to safeguard water quality.

- 5.46 In the course of the application, and in response to the consultation responses from the Environment Agency, the proposed discharge location has been amended so as to be located at the western end of the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension, so as to recharge water in the existing ditch located between the extraction area the river. The effect of this change is that discharged water will raise the ditch water level above that of the river, creating what is known as a recharge trench, with intention of reversing groundwater flows locally, so as to prevent any risk of flow of water from the river into the extraction area, that would otherwise result in a reduced water level in the river. Further information is this is set out in Sections 8 and 16 below.
- 5.47 After the completion of mineral extraction and restoration works active water management will cease. Levels within the waterbodies and fenland scrapes will be self-regulating and no further intervention will be required.

Employment

- 5.48 An estimated 27 people will continue to be directly employed at the site, in mineral extraction, restoration, processing, the office and as drivers of vehicles based at site. Indirectly there will, the application states, be many other jobs supported by the proposals. This development will assist in sustaining the local employment created by the site.

Working Hours

- 5.49 The extraction is planned to be operational 0700 – 1900 Monday to Friday and 0700 – 1300 on Saturdays. This reflects the hours currently consented and the plant site will continue to operate as currently permitted.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760

- 5.50 Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 has been submitted under s.73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and seeks vary Condition Nos. 3, 4, and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 in order to tie in with the proposed working of the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry, the details of which are set out above as part of Planning Application Ref. Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753.
- 5.51 Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 is the substantive planning permission for the existing Woodsford Quarry that was approved on 14th December 2007. The permission was for mineral extraction and progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland including the erection of a processing plant, concrete batching plant, workshop, office and weighbridge at Woodsford Farm. A Bagging Plant has subsequently been added. Progressive low-level restoration of the site, which has been partly completed incorporates an improved drainage scheme, that will ultimately return the land back to agricultural use.
- 5.52 The permission was granted subject to 30 Conditions, including; Condition No. 3 which relates to the duration of the permission; Condition No.4 which refers to the development being undertaken in accordance with the approved plans

and details; and Condition No. 15 which states that no waste or other material shall be imported onto the site and that no material shall be processed at the site other than mineral extracted from within the site.

- 5.53 The reasons for the application is that it is proposed that working in the existing quarry will be paused, if and when extraction within the proposed north eastern extension commences. This is primarily because the existing plant area is to be retained and used to process the mineral from the north eastern extension and because the conveyor that will link the north eastern extension to the plant area, will have to be retained across the full length of the existing quarry, so that full restoration of the existing quarry will not be possible until working in the north eastern extension has been completed.

Background

- 5.54 Since the quarry commenced working minor changes to the phasing and restoration have been made and additional information on its operation has been submitted to the Council by way of planning condition discharge applications. Additionally in 2019, planning permission for a further silt lagoon to the north of the current plant site was granted on Appeal (Appeal Ref. APP/D1265/W/19/3232596). Construction of the silt lagoon is now complete and mineral extraction within the existing quarry has commenced at the eastern end of the site within the area identified on approved plans as Phase M in the eastern reserve. The installation of the conveyor under the Crossways to Woodsford road to take this mineral back to the plant site commenced in June 2023 and was completed in 2024.
- 5.55 The quarry will continue to extract in the eastern reserve until the north eastern extension is ready to be extracted. The mineral from the north eastern extension will be moved using the conveyor system, which would be extended into the north eastern extension via a tunnel under the Woodsford to Morton road which separates the two sites.

Variations of Condition being Sought

- 5.56 This application seeks to make changes to align the continued working of the existing quarry with the working of the north eastern extension, if this is approved. The intention is that there would continue to be only one area of extraction within the extended quarry, so that when extraction commences in the north eastern extension, extraction will be paused in the existing quarry, albeit that its restoration would continue. Whilst this does not require any variation to the existing approved restoration plans, it does necessitate extending the life of the existing quarry.

Variation of Condition No. 3 – Extension of the End Date for Working and Restoration

- 5.57 When Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 was approved it was anticipated that the quarry would take twenty years to extract and restore; this was dealt with in Condition No. 3 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742. The effect of the condition is to require the existing quarry to be restored by 1st October 2029.
- 5.58 Condition No. 3 states:

“Unless with the prior approval of the Mineral Planning Authority to a variation, the development subject of this permission shall be limited to the period ending 20 years from the notified date of commencement of the development, by which time extraction and tipping operations shall have ceased and the site have been restored in accordance with the approved scheme and shall be the subject of aftercare”.

- 5.59 The application seeks vary Condition to extend the end date for working and restoration of the existing quarry to 31st October 2046. It is requested that the working be amended to state:

“Unless with the prior approval of the Mineral Planning Authority to a variation, the development subject of this permission shall be limited to the period ending 31st October 2046 by which time extraction shall have ceased and the site will have been restored in accordance with the approved scheme and shall be the subject of aftercare”.

- 5.60 The application states that this end date has been identified on the basis of the remaining reserves in the existing quarry, the expected reserves of the north eastern extension and the assumption of output from the plant site continuing at a rate of 250,000 tonnes per annum.

- 5.61 The applications makes clear that the mineral reserves are estimates based on boreholes and are subject to fluctuation and output rates varying depending on wider economic conditions and the availability of other materials in the wider market. Table 1 below sets out the assumptions regarding the reserve in the different parts of the extended quarry and how these would be worked.

Table 1: Assumptions regarding the reserve in the different parts of the extended quarry and how these would be worked.

Date	Tonnes/ Time	Activity
March 2026		North East Extension (NE Ext) site preparation work, soil stripping, re locating conveyors, road tunnel etc
March 2027		Extraction in NE Ext commences and pauses in Eastern Reserve
	980,000	Tonnes remaining in Eastern Reserve when extraction switches to NE Ext
	980,000	Tonnes in NE Ext that can be worked before existing silt lagoon space estimated to be completed.
	4 years	Extraction in NE Ext before need to pause and switch to south west reserve (SW) to provide silt space, estimated to be the end of Phase 4 of NE Ext
March 2031		Extraction pauses in NE Extension, switches to commence in SW of the existing quarry (540,000 tonnes)
March 2033		Extraction ceases in SW and moves back to NE Extension.

	2,020,000	Tonnes remaining to be extracted in NE Ext (3.0m tonnes- 0.98mtonnes), which is 8 years working@ 250ktpa
May 2041		Extraction complete in NE Ext
	4 years	To extract the remaining 0.98million tonnes in the Eastern Reserve
May 2045		Extraction completed in Eastern Reserve
October 2046		Restoration completed, plant site and ancillary infrastructure removed.

Variation of Condition No. 4 – Use of the South West Reserve Area

- 5.62 The existing quarry is currently being worked in Phase M within the eastern reserve, i.e. the area adjoining the proposed north eastern extension. No change is proposed to this as a result of the application for the north eastern extension, except that this would be paused to accommodate working in the north eastern extension.
- 5.63 The current approved phasing plan for the plant site, western reserve and south west area of the existing quarry is Drawing No. 91077/CO/W/1 Rev C, agreed under Discharge of Condition approval Ref. 1/E/2005/0742/AuC on 14th May 2018. The plan shows the south western area of the existing quarry as phases J,K & L, and the original intention of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 was that these would be worked as the final phases of the quarry. With the development of the north eastern extension, if approved, the application states that the areas within these phases will be needed to provide silt space for the additional mineral created by part of the north eastern extension and the final phases of the eastern reserve.
- 5.64 The silt space within the quarry has, as noted above, already been extended and that extension was sized to accommodate the already consented reserve. The silt generated from working the north eastern extension will require additional storage. The application states that there is no intention to change the restoration of the south western area and therefore no change to the approved restoration plan for the existing permitted quarry is required or sought.
- 5.65 However as working of the north eastern extension progresses and when monitoring of the remaining silt space indicates that further silt space will be required, the application states that working in the north eastern extension will be paused and extraction of the consented reserves in the south western area of the existing quarry will take place before re-commencing in the north eastern extension.
- 5.66 The application explains that the area proposed for the additional space within the south western area of the site had been discounted at the time of the Planning Appeal Ref. APP/D1265/W/19/3232596 for the current silt lagoon as the landowner had not agreed to the use of the area as a silt lagoon as they hoped it would be developed for housing following the completion of mineral extraction, which the use for silt storage would have precluded. The landowner, Woodsford Farms, the application states, has now changed their position on this and has agreed to silt being placed in this area to facilitate the working on

the north eastern extension. Silt management, the application states, is most sustainable when it is located close to the plant site that generates the silt and therefore the area is the optimum location within the quarry. Accordingly, it is now proposed that Condition 4 be varied as follows:

5.67 The existing Condition No. 4 states:

“Unless otherwise approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority, no development shall be carried out other than in strict accordance with the plans and details hereby approved or the schemes approved under the requirements of these conditions. Operations on the application site shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans, working scheme and details and no part of the operations specified therein shall be amended or omitted without the prior written approval of the Mineral Planning Authority”.

5.68 The application seeks to vary Condition No. 4 so that it states:

“Unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority or required by the provisos of this approval, in so far as the submitted details relate to the red edged application site to which Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 relates, the authorised minerals development shall be undertaken in accordance with either the already authorised arrangements or the arrangements illustrated on:

- (i) Drawing No. 14803 - 2500 - 001 Rev B dated Sept 2015 (Sheet 1);*
- (ii) Drawing No. 14803 – 2500 – 002 dated 28 March 2014 (Sheet 2);*
- (iii) Drawing No. 91077/c0/w/1. Rev D dated July 2023 and titled Western Area Phasing Plan; and*
- (iv) Drawing No. WOOD002.Rev C dated September 2015 and titled Revised Restoration Scheme”.*

5.69 Drawing No. 91077/c0/w/1 has been updated as revision D to note that the south west reserves, marked J,K & L on the plan will be used for silt management. This will be worked when necessary to provide additional silt management capacity. The application states that the exact extent of the south western reserve to be worked will be established based on operational information available at the time, including the silt content of the mineral being worked, which will vary over the life of the site.

5.70 The application states that the restoration of the southern western part of the site will be undertaken in accordance with previously approved plans and as referenced in the wording of the proposed amended condition.

5.71 The application also suggests that an additional condition is attached to the amended permission to including the same condition attached on appeal to Planning Permission Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 which requires the submission of a scheme for the drainage and restoration of that silt lagoon area.

Variation of Condition No. 15 – Processing of Mineral from the North-East Extension

5.72 Condition No. 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 states:

“No waste or other material shall be imported onto the site. No material shall be processed at the site other than mineral extracted from land, the subject of this planning permission”.

- 5.73 The application seeks to vary this condition so as to allow mineral from the north eastern extension to be processed through the existing plant site.
- 5.74 Variation of the condition is also sought to address the import of aggregates to the bagging plant, currently addressed by a stand-alone Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/001616, the end date for which is tied to the end date of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742. That permission could be allowed to lapse as it only has one planning condition requiring removal of the bagging plant but that requirement is covered by the Permitted Development Right which requires the removal of the bagging plant, and is therefore unnecessary.
- 5.75 It is accordingly proposed to vary Condition No. 15 to state:
- “No waste shall be imported onto the site. No material shall be processed at the site other than mineral extracted from land, the subject of this Planning Permission and Planning Permission Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 for the North Eastern Extension of Woodsford Quarry, with the exception of mineral imported for the bagging plant”.*
- Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761
- 5.76 Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 has been submitted under s.73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and seeks vary Condition Nos. 3,5, 7 and 9 of Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 in order to tie in the permission for the existing silt lagoon with the proposed working of the north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry, the details of which are set out above as part of Planning Application Ref. Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753.
- 5.77 As set out Above Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 was granted on appeal in 2019 for an additional silt lagoon to the north of the current plant site (Appeal Ref. APP/D1265/W/19/3232596). Construction of the silt storage area has been completed and extraction operations are on-going in Phase M, in the eastern reserve i.e. at the eastern end of the currently consented quarry.
- 5.78 The quarry will continue to extract in the eastern reserve until the north eastern extension, if approved, is ready for extraction there to commence. The mineral from the eastern reserve is moved using the existing conveyor system, which will be extended into the north eastern extension via a tunnel under the road separating the two sites.
- 5.79 The application explains that the silt lagoon space that is the subject to this application, when initially consented was sized to accommodate the anticipated remaining silt generated by processing the minerals consented under Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 from within the existing Woodsford Quarry. Based on the assumed tonnages of mineral to be extracted from the existing quarry, the existing silt lagoon would be able to accommodate the first four phases of the working of the north eastern extension and accommodate silt from the south western reserve being worked as its replacement. The current application explains that the sizing of silt lagoons is likely to need some adjustment once the precise nature of the mineral from the north eastern extension is known and in particular variances in its silt content are established.

- 5.80 Regardless of any changes to the working of the quarry or the source of the silt, restoration of the silt lagoon to the north of the Plant area will be to agriculture in accordance with the previously approved scheme.

Variations of Condition being Sought

- 5.81 This application seeks to make changes to align the continued working of the existing quarry with the working of the north eastern extension, if this is approved. The intention is that there would continue to be only one area of extraction at any one time within the extended quarry, so that when extraction commences in the north eastern extension, extraction will be paused in the existing quarry, albeit that its restoration would continue. Whilst this does not require any variation to the existing approved restoration plans, it does necessitate extending the life of the existing quarry.

Variation of Condition No. 3 – Extension of the End Date for Working and Restoration

- 5.82 The application explains that the working the north eastern extension as an interlude to completing the existing quarry has formed part of the proposals for Woodsford Quarry and its extension in making the allocations now incorporated in the MSP, and with this the need not only to extend the end date of the main permission for the quarry (i.e. by variation of Condition No. 3 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742, as set out above), but also of the planning permission for the existing lagoon, i.e. Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648.

- 5.83 Condition No. 3 of Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 states:

“The extraction of mineral and the depositing of mineral waste hereby permitted must cease not later than 01 October 2028”.

- 5.84 A variation of Condition No. 3 is sought to extend the end date of the permission to 30th June 2033, i.e. so that it states:

“The extraction of mineral and the depositing of mineral waste hereby permitted must cease not later than 30th June 2033”.

- 5.85 Table 1 above sets out approximate timescales for the completion of mineral extraction including that in the south western part of the site, which would be due in March 2033, with a short transition period during which the use of the silt lagoons would switch from that to the north of the plant area to the use of the lagoons in the south-western area.

- 5.86 The end date for use of the silt lagoon has been estimated based on its capacity to take all of the silt generated by the approved workings, which includes the full extent of the eastern reserve and the south west reserve. If the north eastern extension is approved, some of the additional silt lagoon capacity will be used for silt generated from mineral extracted from the north eastern extension.

Variation of Condition No. 5 – Alignment of the dates for a Submission of a Drainage, Restoration Scheme and Aftercare Schemes

- 5.87 Condition 5 of the consent for the silt lagoon states:

“Within 3 months of a permanent cessation of mineral working authorised by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 and in any event no later than 1st March 2028, a scheme for the drainage of the silt lagoons hereby permitted and for the restoration of the application area edged red on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) to a condition suitable for high quality agricultural use shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The submitted scheme shall provide for the filling of the lagoons with material indigenous to the land edged red or blue on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) and for the restoration of the application area through the placement of indigenous site soils only and for the completion of the site restoration no later than 01 October 2030. The approved drainage and restoration works must be completed and shall be undertaken in accordance with the details and arrangements approved pursuant to this condition”.

- 5.88 The application seeks to vary this condition to reflect the end date for use of the site lagoon noted above so that it states:

“Within 3 months of a permanent cessation of mineral working authorised by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 (as amended) and in any event no later than 31st December 2032, a scheme for the drainage of the silt lagoons hereby permitted and for the restoration of the application area edged red on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) to a condition suitable for high quality agricultural use shall be submitted to the local planning authority for approval. The submitted scheme shall provide for the filling of the lagoons with material indigenous to the land edged red or blue on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) and for the restoration of the application area through the placement of indigenous site soils only and for the completion of the site restoration no later than 30 June 2035. The approved drainage and restoration works must be completed and shall be undertaken in accordance with the details and arrangements approved pursuant to this condition”.

Variation of Condition No. 7 – Alignment of the Date for Submission of an Aftercare Scheme

- 5.89 Condition 7 states:

“Within 3 months of a permanent cessation of mineral working authorised by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 and no later than 1st March 2028 an aftercare scheme detailing a strategy of commitment to a five-year period of post-restoration aftercare land management for all parts of the application area edged red on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted aftercare scheme shall include details of proposals for planting (timing and pattern of vegetation establishment), cultivating, fertilising, watering, draining, and/or otherwise treating the land as appropriate to its intended afteruse including measures for managing soil quality, structure and fertility and the control of weeds. The aftercare scheme shall make provision for the submission and approval of a detailed management programme setting out the steps to be undertaken for

each twelve-month period comprised in the aftercare period which shall specify the steps to be taken, the period during which the steps are to be undertaken and who will be responsible for undertaking each step. The aftercare strategy shall also make provision for an annual meeting to review the previous years' aftercare. The aftercare scheme and detailed programmes of management must be completed and shall be implemented as approved".

- 5.90 The applications seeks to vary this condition so that it states:

"Within 3 months of a permanent cessation of mineral working authorised by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 as amended and no later than 31st December 2032 an aftercare scheme detailing a strategy of commitment to a five-year period of post-restoration aftercare land management for all parts of the application area edged red on the application Site Location Plan (Brunel Surveys Ltd Drawing No. 541E-01 dated May 2015) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The submitted aftercare scheme shall include details of proposals for planting (timing and pattern of vegetation establishment), cultivating, fertilising, watering, draining, and/or otherwise treating the land as appropriate to its intended afteruse including measures for managing soil quality, structure and fertility and the control of weeds. The aftercare scheme shall make provision for the submission and approval of a detailed management programme setting out the steps to be undertaken for each twelve-month period comprised in the aftercare period which shall specify the steps to be taken, the period during which the steps are to be undertaken and who will be responsible for undertaking each step. The aftercare strategy shall also make provision for an annual meeting to review the previous years' aftercare. The aftercare scheme and detailed programmes of management must be completed and shall be implemented as approved".

- 5.91 In relation to the receipt of silt arising from processing mineral from the north east extension Condition 9 states:

"Save for the placement or deposit of any material approved under condition 5 of this planning permission and for mineral waste arising from development permitted by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 no materials of any kind shall be imported to the application area site for the purpose of deposit as waste".

- 5.92 The application seeks to vary the condition so as to allow the import of material from the north east extension in the event that the application for the extension is approved, so the amended condition would state:

*"Save for the placement or deposit of any material approved under condition 5 of this planning permission and for mineral waste arising from development permitted by planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 as amended and permission ref ** for the north east extension of Woodsford Quarry, no materials of any kind shall be imported to the application area site for the purpose of deposit as waste".*

6 Planning History

- 6.1 Planning Permission Ref: 1/E/2005/0742 for Woodsford Quarry, was granted to Woodsford Farms in 14th December 2007 for the Mineral extraction and progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland including the erection of a

processing plant, concrete batching plant, workshop, office and weighbridge. This the main permission for the existing Woodsford Quarry, that Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 now seeks to vary.

- 6.2 Application Ref. 1/E/2005/0742/AuC which was for the Approval under Condition No. 4 (Adherence to approved plans and details) and No. 20 (Limitation on erection of structure, fixed plant etc) of planning permission 1/E/2005/0742 comprising layout changes and extension to the processing area, minor changes to the restoration plan for the western part of the quarry and revised scheme of phasing, was approved on 14th May 2018.
- 6.3 Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648 which was for the Formation of silt lagoons to serve existing processing plant at Woodsford Quarry with site restoration to agricultural use, was granted on appeal against non-determination by Dorset County Council (Appeal Ref. APP/D1265/W/19/3232596) on 25th November 2019.
- 6.4 Application Ref. WD/D/18/002648/DoC which was for the Discharge of Condition No. 6 (Landscape and Ecology Management Plan), No. 11 (Archaeology), No. 18 (Surface Water Management and Drainage) and No. 20 (Reversing Alarms) of planning permission WD/D/18/002648, was approved on 12th February 2020.
- 6.5 The north eastern extension site as included as Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension, Woodsford in MSP which was adopted by Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole Council on 31 December 2019.
- 6.6 Planning Applications Refs. P/FUL/2023/04753, P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761, i.e. the applications that are the subject of this report were submitted in August 2023.

7 Constraints and Relevant Designations

- 7.1 Relevant designations within or in the vicinity of the application site, and other features worthy of note, are listed below.

7.2 Landscape Designations

- National Character Areas (Natural England): Dorset Heaths
- Landscape Character Areas (Dorset Council): Valley Pasture

7.3 Ecological Designations

- Ramsar
 - Dorset Heathlands; approximately 2350m to the south-east, 2920m to the south west, 3150m to the north east and 3220 to the east;
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
 - Dorset Heathlands; approximately 2350m to the south-east, 2920m to the south west, 3150m to the north east and 3220 to the east;
 - Poole Harbour; approximately 14.8km to the east;
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

- Dorset Heaths; approximately 2350m to the south-east, 2920m to the south west, 3150m to the north east and 3220 to the east;
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - River Frome: approximately 30m to the north and 400m to the north east;
 - Winfrith Heath: approximately 820m to the south
 - Warmwell Heath: approximately 2350 to the south-east
 - Oakers Wood: approximately 2000m to the north-east
 - Oakers Bog: approximately 3220m to the north-east
 - Culp Peppers Dish: approximately 3700m to the north-east
 - Turner's Puddle Heath: approximately 4000m to the north-east
- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
 - Hurst Heath SNCI: Approximately 250m east of the application site;
 - Sheep's Walk Pit: Approximately 330m to the south of the application site.
 - Pallington Coppice SNCI: Approximately 1.8km northeast of the application site; and
 - Redbridge SNCI: Approximately 1.9km to the south of the application site; and

7.4 Heritage Assets

Listed buildings:

- Frome Bridge (Grade II): approximately 118m to the north
- Barn 20m east of Woodsford Manor (Grade II): approximately 400m to the west
- Coach House and Stable immediately east of Woodsford Manor (Grade II): approximately 417m to the west
- Unidentified Monument, in the churchyard, 15m east of the east wall of the Church of St John the Baptist (Grade II): approximately 454m to the west
- Church of Saint John The Baptist (Grade II): approximately 465m to the west
- Glebe Cottage (Grade II): approximately 486m to the west
- Woodsford House, including attached stable on north (Grade II): approximately 511m to the west
- Old School House (Grade II): approximately 493m to the west
- Woodsford Castle Grade I): approximately 921m to the west
- Bwthyn (Grade II): approximately 711m to the north-east
- Pallington Farm House: approximately 915m to the north-east

Conservation Areas:

- Morton Conservation Area: approximately 985m south-east

Non-Designated Heritage Assets:

- The north-eastern part of the site comprises an area of watermeadows that are thought to have been developed in the late 17th century;
- WWII pill-box on Watery Lane which is identified as a non-designated heritage asset, adjacent to the site.

7.5 Tree Protection Orders

- TPO/2024/0013: Covers the whole of the application site of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, i.e. the north eastern extension area, plus and a small to the immediate north east of the site. The TPO was issued by Dorset Council on 6th March 2024.

7.6 Rights of Way

Most relevant:

- S60/2 Footpath: approximately 25m to the north
- S39/60 Footpath: approximately 50m to the north
- S60/1 Footpath: approximately 50m to the north-west
- S60/4 Footpath: approximately 50m to the south
- S60/3 Footpath: approximately 5m to the south

8 **Consultation Responses**

Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753

- 8.1 There have been three rounds of public consultation as a result of which no representations were received from individuals.

Consultees

Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753

Moreton Parish Council

- 8.2 Morton Parish Council has submitted a very lengthy (31 page) and detailed response to the application. A full copy of the of the response can be found at: <https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=399129>

- 8.3 In summary this response makes the following points:

- A survey undertaken at the time of preparation of the MSP found that over 80% of Moreton households were against the proposed Station Road and Hurst Farm quarries (although the development of Hurst Farm Station Road site does not form part of this application). The vote did not include the Woodsford Quarry Extension Quarry because it is sited on land within another Parish Council. Nevertheless, the “No” vote against the Hurst Farm quarry should also be taken as a ‘No’ vote against the Combined Hurst Farm and Woodsford Quarry Extension Quarry.
- Local Residents overwhelmingly consider that the area is already over-quarried, with quarries at Moreton Pit, Warmwell, Woodsford and an additional site at Summer Farm is also to be quarried with much of the resulting HGV traffic routed through Morton Station.
- The response makes a number of detailed comments and raises a number of questions on the adequacy of the information contained in the Environmental Statement submitted with the application.
- It raises concerns about the impact on the occupants of the two properties at Woodsford Lower Dairy in the centre of the site.
- The time for the working of the different phases is difficult to understand and is likely to give rise to conflict with the concurrent working on the

adjacent Hurst Farm site, which the MSP states should not happen. This needs to be given greater consideration;

- The working of the two sites simultaneously amounts to the working of a single very large quarry and the working of each site is likely to impact on the working of the other and give rise to significant cumulative effects;
- Concern that the planning applications for the two sites may not be considered together at the same committee;
- The operators at Woodsford Quarry have miscalculated the amount of silt that will need to be managed, resulting in the need to provide additional silt lagoon capacity;
- The operators at Woodsford Quarry have not understood the flow of groundwater across the site and the assessment does not adequately assess the impact on the water table of extraction to greater depth than the original Woodsford quarry, and the impact in conjunction with the proposed creation and dredging on of lakes on the adjacent Hurst Farm site;
- Neither operator of the proposed Woodsford extension or the Hurst Farm/Station Road site has indicated in its documentation that it has modelled the water table across the land which they intend to excavate;
- Neither has either operator has indicated in their documentation that they have modelled the River Frome basin without and with the lakes on their restored quarries, and consequently their claims that the lakes will aid the River Frome are not based upon detailed modelling investigation;
- The proposed dredging on the adjacent Hurst Farm site may result in changes in groundwater flow and this in turn could result in an increase the quantity of silt on the Woodsford Extension quarry;
- The Woodsford Extension quarry phases close to the Hurst Farm quarry may also be adversely affected by surface run off from the large flat Hurst Farm operating base.
- Woodsford Quarry found that the water flowing across their original land was greater and at a higher level than they had planned for and as a result it had to spend considerable time and money submitting a Planning Application (PA) to increase the size of their original silt lagoon.
- The Hurst Farm operation is likely by virtue of its dredging activity and creation of lakes to impact on the water balance on its land and part of the proposed Woodsford Quarry extension.
- The MSP requires the Hurst Farm quarry to operate after Station Road quarry has completed, but the applicant, has applied to develop the Hurst Farm side of the site first, followed by Station Road. The eastern area of the Woodsford Quarry Extension and the western area of Hurst Farm should preferably not be worked simultaneously.
- The Restoration Vision in the MSP states that the restoration must explore the opportunity to provide a large-scale wetland restoration scheme hydrologically connected to the River Frome, whereas the lakes on Phases 4, 5,6, and 9 would not be not be directly connected to the River Frome.
- The lakes will not provide flood relief for the River Frome as they are not connected to the River.
- The Woodsford Extension area is made of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, most of which will be lost.

- The lakes proposed will provide very little if any informal recreation/public open space.
- Moreton Parish Council fully supports the proposal to upgrade the proposed public footpath across the site during restoration to Public Bridleway status.

Affpuddle & Turnerspudde Parish Council

- 8.4 Affpuddle & Turnerspudde Parish Council objects the application on the grounds that there will be a potential loss of amenity value as a result of HGV vehicles travelling through the village of Affpuddle on the B3390.
- 8.5 It is concerned that there are no measures to ensure the agreed off-site HGV lorry road haulage routes are adhered to.
- 8.6 The Parish Council is concerned that there will be a significant negative impact on the amenity value for people living in the village of Affpuddle from more HGVs using this route. Any increase in large vehicles travelling through the village will have a significant detrimental impact on pedestrians, dog walkers, horse riders and cyclists. The Parish Council is keen to improve the physical links between Briantspudde and Affpuddle but further intensification on the B3390 will make this more difficult.
- 8.7 It understands that the route from Waddock Cross to the A35 northwards cannot be restricted solely to HGVs visiting and leaving Woodsford Quarry and not to other HGV traffic. Given this, it considers that the only way of guaranteeing that the route will not be used by mineral traffic from the quarry is to restrict its use to all HGV traffic except for access, so mandating them to use the preferred northern route.
- 8.8 Should this not prove possible, the Parish Council would request that the Applicant submits further proposals for other measures including binding legal agreements that would prevent the potential negative impacts of increased HGV movements travelling through Affpuddle.
- 8.9 The Parish Council is concerned that the proposals do not lead to any unintended increase in the number of HGVs on the unsuitable narrow country lanes elsewhere in the Parish.

Knightsford Parish Council

- 8.10 Knightsford Parish Council has similarly submitted an initial lengthy and detailed response, focussing on the noise impacts of the development, and further response following the initial Regulation 25 consultation, which in summary make the following points:
- The conveyor road crossing and the landscaping of gateways and signage must be carefully considered and landscaped. These have been very unsightly in the existing quarry;
 - Restoration must be completed in a timely manner and immediately after working in each phase;
 - The submitted documents suggest restoration to fishing lakes but with providing any general public rights of access.
 - Do not agree that the assessed visual impact will be minimal;
 - Unsightly visual impact of stockpiles of white sand;

- It is proposed that a new footpath between the old mill leat bridge on Watery Lane and the existing footpath S60/3 is part of the restoration. This should be classified a cycle-path - gravelled and maintained;
- Footpath S60/1 has a missing public footpath bridge over the River Frome just upstream of the listed bridge. A new bridge should be installed to improve the amenity of residents who have to put up with the disruption of quarrying for a further 15 years.
- Simultaneous operations within the proposed extension and the proposed adjacent Hurst Farm site will have cumulative impacts from noise;
- The application should make reference to BS 4142 and BS 5228;
- There is no reference to 'Best Available Technology' (BAT) to minimise noise at source as required by BS 5228;
- The noise assessment fails to identify grader noise here - removing over size flint nodules – as a noise source. This will be the most dominant noise at the quarry face and will be particularly noticeable to residents and businesses downwind from the prevailing wind.
- The assessment of noise from dewatering pumps is inadequate;
- Smart white noise reverse alarms should be used. These adjust the alarm to 10db above the ambient noise level;
- The application refers to 3m high soil bunds. These need to be close to the source or receptor to be effective. The topography of the valley means any bunds either for visual or audible use may not be effective;
- In September and October 2023 work started without planning permission involving the removal of hedges and trees, to install culverts and haul road gateways. As a result, hedges that were grubbed up were simply placed on the ground and soil mounded around their roots. They were not trenched in and there is a concern that these will now not survive. Should they not do so, then there should be a requirement to replace them.

Active Travel England

- 8.11 Have advised that they have no comment.

National Grid Electricity Transmission

- 8.12 Has advised that it has no objection.

National Grid Gas Transmission

- 8.13 Has advised that it has no objection.

Environment Agency

- 8.14 Objects and recommends that the application should be refused: There have been four rounds of consultation to which the Environment Agency has responded as well additional correspondence.
- 8.15 The Environment Agency initially advised that there was insufficient information included in the ES Chapter, ES Chapter 10 on Water Management, and the accompanying Hydrogeological Impact Assessment (HIA) submitted with the north eastern extension planning application (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753) to determine the risks to the water environment, and therefore that unless additional information was submitted which addressed its concerns, it recommend that planning permission should be refused in line with

paragraph 174 (now paragraph 187) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 8.16 It advised that to ensure development is sustainable, applicants must provide adequate information to demonstrate that the risks posed by development to the environment can be satisfactorily managed. It requested that additional evidence to enable it to make an informed decision on the acceptability of the proposals, be submitted.
- 8.17 It raised three specific concerns. The first of these was that the submitted ES Chapter and the accompanying HIA relied on the hydrogeological information from the existing Woodsford Quarry rather than assessing the impacts of the proposed extension and that this was not sufficient because there are significant differences between the two. In particular it was concerned that the evidence from the existing quarry shows that there have been changes to the normal pattern of groundwater behaviour since quarrying within the existing quarry first started. These impacts include the lowering of groundwater levels during low flow periods in summer and autumn, and that the groundwater flow regime has changed since quarrying commenced, with one of the Boreholes used for monitoring adjacent to the river now being dry, providing an indication that the groundwater level is at or below river level.
- 8.18 The Environment Agency therefore advised that the current operation has the potential to deprive the River Frome channel adjacent to the site of groundwater baseflow and potentially to reverse flow inducing drainage from the river. The concern is that the proposed north eastern extension would have a similar impact. It has also additionally expressed concerned about any potential impact on the two current water abstraction licences in proximity to the site, and that the assessment should include the quantification of the abstraction regimes in comparison with recharge and discharge to compare with the volume estimates presented for the extension area.
- 8.19 Second, and in addition to this, the Environment Agency was concerned that the proposed restoration of the north eastern extension differs from the current operations in that the workings will partly be restored as open water bodies, and in particular in those phases closest to the River Frome. The proposal comprises a succession of tiered lakes and water bodies at different water level elevations to replicate the groundwater gradient and movement towards the river. Whilst it states that this design is proposed to address the long term risk to the River Frome, it was concerned about the potential for the river to drain to the lower elevation water bodies within the workings, which would be lower than the river, and that this would have a potentially adverse impact on the river which is an Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It was particularly concerned that the restoration scheme will result in water level differences because the lakes that would be created would be unlined and located within the very permeable terrace gravels. As a result, it advised that it needed to be demonstrated that there would not be adverse impact, based on reasonable evidence of the resulting groundwater flow.
- 8.20 The third consequential concern was, because the River Frome is a Principal Salmon River, that it is not just the impact on low flows which are of concern but also that any changes to the flows could negatively impact on the available

habitat and could unacceptably impact on salmon at the population level. The Environment Agency expressed particular concern that a reduction in flow might extend throughout the year. It therefore required more information on the scale of the change to the flow of the river and possible mitigation for this impact with respect to fisheries, once a more detailed understanding of the hydrogeology of the site had been determined.

- 8.21 In addition, the consultation response from the Environment Agency expressed concern that the HIA had not considered the cumulative impact of the proposed north-eastern extension and the development of the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites proposed in Planning App No. P/FUL/2023/03982).
- 8.22 The applicant, in response to these points, submitted an Addendum to the HIA, which referred to annual groundwater monitoring reports produced for the existing quarry, and stated that there is an overall constancy of groundwater levels, which indicates that mineral extraction and associated operations have not impacted adversely on the water environment in the vicinity of the quarry, and that the similarities of the geology, water environment and operations of the current quarry to the proposed north eastern extension indicate that additional specific mitigation measures are not required.
- 8.23 The response additionally stated that because all of the areas of the proposed restoration scheme, to be undertaken on a phase-by-phase basis, would be physically separated from each other, there would be no surface water connections between them and they would each act hydraulically largely independently of one another. Further they stated that the maintenance of water levels within the restoration area will be ensured by the hydraulic continuity with its surroundings with the groundwater flow being maintained through the restored area, for the same reason. The response stated that comparison of the waterbody elevations and average groundwater levels demonstrated that the predicted restoration levels are accurate and represent anticipated conditions.
- 8.24 For these reasons the applicant stated that the configuration of the existing drainage network, would be unchanged, and that the groundwater flow regime is such that there would be no anticipated change to flow within the river. Groundwater derived from dewatering, which would be discharged into the existing drainage network, and would follow the same discharge route to the current discharge point to the east of the north eastern extension area. As a result, there would not be any change to the volume of flow within the local water environment, with all water derived from dewatering being retained within the water system.
- 8.25 As a result, the response document concludes that the cumulative impacts of the Woodford north eastern extension and the Hurst Farm, Station Road proposals upon water levels will be very restricted both laterally and temporally.
- 8.26 In response to the submission of the HIA Addendum the Environment Agency then advised, that the latter conclusion by the applicant was contradicted by the groundwater level data which shows significant changes in patterns of level and range during the operation of the quarry works and that this includes groundwater level lowering by between 1 and 2m during summer and autumn

low flow periods during the quarrying works post 2010. This was set out in the initially submitted ES Chapter and HIA and indicates that some of the low levels recorded within the proposed extension area are at not above river and ditch levels, and impacts in groundwater borehole levels are observed more than 800m from the operational development area.

- 8.27 These observations, the Environment Agency commented are significant for the extension development because the proposed workings will dewater the groundwater levels because the projected base of the excavations which will be below river and ditch levels during operation, and the working method. It therefore advised that impact on the River Frome SSSI water course due to dewatering needs more detailed assessment and that because the groundwater throughput is in the order of 1% of the low flow regime or less, whilst the projected dewatering rates are much greater and could be up to 20% of the low flow, with the concern being that the potential for influence on the SSSI flow regime is a significant.
- 8.28 In relation to the issue the relative levels of the water in the River Frome and the groundwater in the extension area, the Environment Agency further commented that the EIA Addendum confirms that the elevation of the drainage ditch across the northeastern extension area and that this is below the River Frome channel. However, whilst it agreed that the potential for surface waters in the River Frome to be influenced by quarry dewatering will be constrained by the ditch, it remained concerned that the projected depth of dewatering will also exceed the base elevation of the ditch system, so that the extent of influence of the dewatering would extend towards the Frome channel. Furthermore, it advised that upstream from the ditch, the Frome channel through Woodsford and Frome Bridge is in hydraulic continuity with the groundwater at the site, and there is the potential for impact on flows due to quarry operations, which consequently require further assessment.
- 8.29 In relation to the cumulative impact it advised that once the issues set out above have been resolved then the joint impacts on the Hurst Farm and Woodsford development can be reviewed including any implications for the Hurst Wood SNCI community and discharge of dewatering waters.
- 8.30 In response to this further consultation comment from the Environment Agency, the applicant then submitted a response document with details from a survey of the river, detailing the relationship between the elevations of the River Frome, historic ditches and base of mineral workings, and potential groundwater flows. This confirmed that the base on the mineral working closest to the river would be below the level of river (between 0.12 m and 3.13 m below the river water level in the closest phases), although the report states that the difference between the river and western phases, in Phases 7 and 8, would only be minimal.
- 8.31 Most significantly, and notwithstanding the above point, the response then sets out an amended proposal in relation to the proposed mitigation by use of the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension, with the proposed recharge of water to the existing deep ditch located between the northern limit of mineral extraction and the river. Specifically it proposed that in Phases 1a, 2 and 3 to discharge water from these phases, after settlement, to the western

extremity of the existing deep ditch, with water being pumped from the settlement lagoons that are to be created in Phase 1a. Water would be conveyed in a pipeline, which would be installed immediately to the south of the screening bunds. The quality of water would be assured by settlement and the use of a flocculant plant. The same method of water management would be maintained throughout the operational life of the quarry.

- 8.32 The effect of this change is that discharged water will raise the ditch water level, which will act as a recharge trench. The flow direction within the ditch is eastwards, with the result that the mitigating effects will occur across the whole width of extraction areas 2 and 1a/3, with the raising of the ditch water level above that of the river would reversing groundwater flows locally, thereby preventing any flow from the river into the extraction area.
- 8.33 In Phases 7 and 8, the response document stated, because of the minimal height difference between the river and base of Phases 7 and 8, that these mitigation measures are not considered to be necessary.
- 8.34 In separate correspondence with the Environment Agency the applicant additionally proposed mitigation measures in relation to the impact on the Hurst Heath SNCI. This advised that the effects of dewatering within Phase 5, the closest to the SNCI feature, will be temporary and reversible, and that once mineral extraction and restoration have been completed active water management will cease and groundwater levels will recover. As a result the response stated that residual impacts on features within Hurst Wood are not anticipated. Nevertheless, it also proposed that a perforated pipe system could be used to convey dewatering water from Phase 5 to irrigate the area in the short term, until groundwater levels had recovered.
- 8.35 Despite this submission, the Environment Agency, subsequently maintained their objection and repeated their previously stated concerns that the effects the proposed development at Woodsford Quarry would have on groundwater and the resulting impacts on the River Frome. They additionally expressed concerns about the likely adverse impacts on the SNCI community in Hurst Heath during operation and on completion, and that further, dewatering and diversion of flows would cause depleted groundwater movement on to the Hurst Farm site and could prevent the proposed 'wet working' development and the ability to maintain groundwater levels as proposed as part of the Hurst Farm scheme.
- 8.36 The Environment Agency advised that its preferred approach to working across the Woodsford Quarry extension area should be based on water level control across all extraction areas, at all times, using the premise that groundwater levels are maintained above the River Frome during medium and low flows to prevent river losses. It advised, whilst in principle therefore, that dewatering could still be undertaken in the higher River Terraces above the river level, that at the lower levels, the development would need to be worked wet. It also advised that due consideration needed to be given to the relative timing of operations in the Woodsford north eastern extension and on the adjacent Hurst Farm site (which comprises part of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982). It expressed particular concern that the parts of the Woodsford Quarry extension area have a potential to influence flows across

the Hurst farm development. They therefore requested that the applicant consider the possibility of a combined wet and dry working scheme.

- 8.37 Specifically in response to the amended proposals to use the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension as a recharge trench, they also commented that this had thus far not been a feature of the Environmental Statement (ES) or supporting documents. Nor had there been any supporting evidence to demonstrate compensation is likely to be successful. They were also concerned that any system for re-introduction of compensation water to the groundwater implies that the ditch system will be used as a soakaway and for the settlement of fines. This they stated also raises several issues regarding the suitability of the ditch system as a de facto settlement lagoon; the ecological impact on the ditch system; the capacity of the system and to what extent water will remain in the ditch to generate a positive head; and potential impacts at high flows that exacerbate downstream flooding.
- 8.38 They also stated that the groundwater re-introduction needed to be able to demonstrate that elevated groundwater levels could be maintained and not dissipated so quickly that the net effect does not achieve the distribution either by area or in time.
- 8.39 In relation to the proposed mitigation of the potential impact on the Hurst Heath SNCI the Environment Agency advised that the proposals for operating in Phase 5 adjacent to the SNCI community are for dewatering to 29.6 mAOD from an average groundwater level in the order of 33 mAOD. The implication is, the commented is that groundwater levels could be significantly reduced in the SNCI community during the operations. Specifically in response to the proposal that groundwater from the dewatering could be introduced to the Hurst Heath area, to irrigate through pipework, they commented that without knowing the required conditions to support the community, it is unclear if this is likely to be effective or even detrimental if water quality and quantity is not appropriate, and consequently advised that a specific assessment is undertaken to identify the most appropriate course of action during operations.
- 8.40 On-going dialogue with the Environment Agency and the applicant has continued in an attempt to secure resolution of the outstanding issue. For the reasons set out above the Environment Agency's substantive advice remains unchanged and it recommends that the application for the north eastern extension be refused for the reasons set out above. It has in the meantime also advised in relation to Planning Application Ref. Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982 for the concurrent Hurst Farm and Station Road application, that it recommends approval of the application subject to a number of conditions. Its comments and recommendation in relation to that application are set out in the accompanying report on Planning Application Ref. Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982.
- 8.41 Since the last substantive consultation response from the Environment Agency, the applicant has submitted a Counsel's Opinion, setting out reasons why it is considered that the Environment has as a statutory consultee, taken an unlawful approach to the assessment of the cumulative impact of the development, contrary to settled caselaw, and that there is consequently a danger that the Dorset Council Mineral Planning Authority as decision maker

will be misled by the information presented, and may also reach an unlawful decision. A separate Counsel's Opinion has also been submitted by the applicant for the Hurst Farm – Station Road application, expressing a contrary view.

- 8.42 In response to this both Counsel's Opinions have been sent on to the Environment Agency, who have advised that their views on the two applications remain unchanged, and that the Hurst Farm - Station Road application (Planning Application Ref. Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982) can be approved subject to conditions, whilst they continue to recommend refusal of the Woods north eastern extension application, for the reasons set out above.

Natural England

- 8.43 Natural England in their response to the consultation on the three applications, which was submitted following receipt of the consultation responses from the Environment Agency, has advised that it shares the concerns expressed by Environment Agency about the potential effects on the River Frome SSSI and the Hurst Heath SNCI. It states that the River Frome SSSI is of national importance and as a chalk stream it is part of a wider international resource of which England hosts a significant proportion worldwide.
- 8.44 It has expressed concern about potential adverse effects of de-watering proposed as part of the development of the north eastern extension both from Woodsford north-eastern extension application alone and in-combination with possible effects resulting from the adjoining minerals application at Hurst Farm and Station Road (Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982) on the Hurst Heath SNCI, and in particular its population of nationally rare heath lobelia (*Lobelia urens*), an issue also raised by the Environment Agency.
- 8.45 In relation to the River Frome SSSI they note that the objection from Environment Agency is based on both water quality and flow concerns and it comments that both water quality and flow regimes are critical in supporting the features of the SSSI.
- 8.46 The further note that the risk to the SSSI from the de-watering increases with proximity to the river valley due to increasingly porous gravels which could result in significantly greater drawdown effect than in those phases furthest away from the river valley. It is also concerned that the adverse effects of drawdown are likely to be exacerbated during periods of low flow such as the summer months compared to the winter. Consequently they advise that significant changes to elements of the application are likely to be necessary, as the Environment Agency has advised, to resolve these issues.
- 8.47 It also comments that the location of water discharged into the SSSI from dewatering activities needs to be in an appropriate location to mitigate for any flow reduction which is caused and be of equivalent quality (silt content/turbidity/chemical composition and pH etc) to that in the river.
- 8.48 Natural England states that it is also concerned about the use of chemicals flocculants which it advises, should be avoided.
- 8.49 It also offers comments in relation to the nearby Hurst Heath SNCI, which supports the only original population of heath lobelia remaining in Dorset and

its particular concern is that this is dependent on a hydrological regime that maintains wet conditions, and that it would be vulnerable to drying if groundwater supply from higher in the catchment is curtailed by de-watering. It is also concerned that the potential hydrological effects from the Hurst Farm application could act in combination and would complicate the understanding of any adverse impacts.

- 8.50 Natural England notes that whilst the Hurst Farm application includes plans to manage Hurst Heath for heath lobelia and secure the expansion of its population as well as to benefit other ecological interests the evidence from the Woodford north eastern extension application provides little certainty that the groundwater levels fundamental to the species survival will not be compromised at the existing population (c.120m away from the application boundary) but also at the locations where expansion is planned. Thus it would not only affect the existing small heath lobelia site but also other sites over a wider area.
- 8.51 It is concerned that although the proposed de-watering would be temporary, that the application plans show that 3 phases (4, 5 and 6) would be open at the same time. It considers that it is hard to predict the long-term significance for the SNCI of a temporary effect. It is also concerned that with the final restoration, to an angling lake the end use of the nearest Phase 5, would not be without potential effects as any easterly surface flows towards Hurst Heath and the SNCI would be permanently interrupted.
- 8.52 It also states that with the potential mitigation for effects of de-watering on the SNCI, it would also not be in favour of maintaining wetness by artificial pumping of water because there would be a risk of more major alterations to hydrology that might be damaging. Instead, it suggest that consideration be given to infilling the drain within Hurst Heath (the southward extension of the drain that forms the boundary between phase 5 and Hurst Heath) which could serve to mitigate too dry conditions in summer. This, it states, could be combined with management of the western part of Hurst Heath not within the control of the Hurst Farm applicants where some removal of secondary woodland and if present, rhododendron, would also benefit the hydrology. Any rhododendron within this part of Hurst Heath it states, also presents a threat to successful elimination of this invasive species within the remainder of the site which would be a key aim associated with the Hurst Farm planning application. Thus it states that securing management of this small western part of Hurst Heath would have significant benefits.
- 8.53 Natural England further states that the effective monitoring of the SNCI and its hydrogeological regime is critical to establishing both an existing baseline and a context through which any nearby dewatering can be controlled to avoid harm. It advises that the monitoring scheme between both application sites needs to be complementary and evidence shared. At present it states that it is concerned that there is not adequate information on the scope of the monitoring for Natural England to comment on of for the Council to consider.
- 8.54 In the event that some elements of the application are revised Natural England advises that changes to the restoration plan are also considered. It questions whether the large areas given over to angling lakes is consistent with the vision

in the approved MSP. Moreover, it states that the management of any angling lakes needs to be addressed because, if stocked with carp, this would compromise not only the ecological condition of the angling lakes themselves but could also pose a risk of accidental introduction to neighbouring wildlife lakes which would be harmful. They also comment that the wildlife lakes would benefit from a larger zone of shallows around their margins. In our view, this is more important than having islands. It would also, they advise, be advantageous if there was a significant terrestrial buffer zone between Hurst Heath and the adjacent lake.

Historic England

- 8.55 Historic England has returned a response that relates to all three applications for Woodsford Quarry.

Historic England's Advice

- 8.56 Historic England states that its interest in the applications stems from the proximity of existing and proposed quarrying operations to Woodsford Castle, which is a Grade I listed building now owned by the Landmark Trust.

Significance of Woodsford Castle

- 8.57 It advises that Woodsford Castle is a highly unusual historic building. It is a high status medieval house that was built with defensive capabilities but then subsequently declined in importance, to be used as a farmhouse. It comments that the way that Woodsford Castle appears in its surroundings now is very different from the way that it was experienced in late medieval times when the curtilage of the fortified house would have been far more extensive. At that time, the building would have had a very different appearance and significance to those who encountered it. However, its imposing presence stands as a reminder of its past feudal history, as well as providing evidence of the decline that such buildings could suffer in later times.
- 8.58 It advises that one of the ways in which the setting of a listed building can be experienced is through a visual appreciation of it within its surroundings. This can be done from views both towards and from the heritage asset. However, it advises that there is also a more intangible aspect to setting, which is the context of the wider environs in which that asset is encountered. This, it advises, is particularly applicable to rural historic sites, where awareness of a heritage asset is from within a wider landscape.
- 8.59 It also comments that the historic purpose and status of a manor or country house is reflected in the land holding over which it held domain and that unsympathetic development or use in that land can affect the appreciation of that building's status and its historic relationship with its environs, as well as its aesthetic qualities. Such changes of character to the surrounding landscape may be harmful to the asset's significance.

8.60 Although situated in a relatively out of the way location in the Dorset countryside, Historic England advises in this case that the proximity of the Castle to the highway and a number of rights of way makes its exterior very publicly visible. Whilst the definition of land as 'setting' does not rely on public access to it being available, it advises that this is a relevant consideration when assessing the impact of a development on the surroundings from which the heritage asset can be viewed.

8.61 It further advises that the open and rural landscape around Woodsford Castle contributes to its setting, and thus its significance.

Historic England advice on the Planning Applications

8.62 Historic England's comments on the three applications is as follows:

8.63 Planning permission is being sought for an extension of the existing quarry into an allocated site and in association with this, three changes are required to the conditions of the planning permission that covers the existing Woodsford Quarry. Those changes are to extend the life of the quarry and its plant site to accommodate working of the extension, to allow for provision of silt space necessary to accommodate silt from the extension site and to update wording to allow the plant site to process the material from the extension site.

8.64 Planning Application P/FUL/2023/04753 seeks to revise the approved phasing of working, extend the duration of the development and allow importation of mineral and processing of mineral from the extension site. It is an amendment of an approved 2005 application for a quarry to be worked for 20 years and then restored.

8.65 Planning Application P/FUL/2023/4760 is for a revised method of working at the quarry to use existing processing facilities for gravels extracted from the area of the proposed quarry extension, and application P/FUL/2023/4761 seeks to extend the timescale of the existing silt lagoon. The lagoon was granted consent on appeal in 2018.

8.66 Historic England advised on the determined at appeal relating to the construction of the new silt lagoon in 2018. It stated that it was satisfied that the proposed mitigation measures had been designed to minimise the harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle but advised the plans would still have an impact on the open nature of the landscape which contributes to the setting of the Castle. It explained the importance of adhering to the development's time limit in order to restore the Castle's setting.

8.67 It states that the Inspector agreed with Historic England's views on the impact of the proposals on the setting of the castle. He stated that the lagoon would have a 'harmful impact on the rural and open character of the area, which is important to the setting of the listed building and appreciation of its historic setting.' However, because major change to the landscape had already been

brought about by the existing workings, the additional impact of the proposed lagoon would be at the lower end of 'less than substantial harm'.

- 8.68 Historic England advised at the time of the original application that it would be concerned at future applications to prolong the life of the quarry or further extend it in areas that are in closer proximity to Woodsford Castle. It states that the Inspector also put considerable weight on the temporary nature of the quarry and the consequent impact on the setting of the Castle.
- 8.69 It comments that the silt lagoon which is the subject of application sits in relatively close proximity to the Grade I listed castle. We will regret its continued presence beyond the original timescale for its removal but acknowledge that its visual impact from public viewpoints is limited.
- 8.70 Historic England states that it is its understanding of Planning Application P/FUL/2023/04753 that this now seeks to change the lifespan of the approved quarry from 2029 - 2046 - a considerable extension, linked to the projected lifespan of the north eastern extension to the quarry
- 8.71 It is proposed to 'pause' the working of the approved quarry area, in order to extend into the north eastern extension, but at a certain stage work on that extension will be paused to re-activate workings in the original quarry. This plan, Historic England comment, could lead to a situation where the quarry workings will exist across both the originally approved site and the north eastern extension site at the same time, albeit that active quarrying will not occur on both sites concurrently, and this plan results from the need to accommodate more silt storage required as a result of the development of the north eastern extension.
- 8.72 It observes that the proposals now include an additional area of land for silt storage in the south west corner of the quarry site which it had previously advised (and the Planning Inspector at the appeal agreed) would be a far more preferable location for a silt lagoon, since it was further away from Woodsford Castle. This suggestion, it comments was rejected by the applicant as unfeasible since the landowner could not release it. Historic England expresses disappointment, now the existing silt lagoon has almost been completed, that this land has now been made available.
- 8.73 Historic England advise that the Planning Inspector, on his decision on the silt lagoon appeal, made a clear judgement on the harm caused to the significance of Woodsford Castle by the original quarry consent, which seems relevant to the extension of the approval for it, stating that:

"Whether or not any harm/balance was considered in the original application, the existing quarry clearly has a major harmful impact on the character of the land that forms an important part of the setting of the listed building that must be taken into account when considering what is proposed for the appeal site. To my mind the harm would, in terms of the National Policy Framework, be categorised as 'substantial harm'."

The harm is important, as identified by the Parish Council, because the change to the character of the land caused by the quarry spoils the approach to the listed building from the south. It does not matter whether or not the listed building can be seen from the footpaths or land generally, the industrial nature of the character of the quarry is in one's mind after passing through the quarry workings and causes considerable harm to the rural character of the approach to the listed building across fields.

The appeal site, with further quarry workings, bunds and silt lagoons, will clearly make a further negative contribution in terms of the character of the area. However, this is where I disagree a little with Historic England, as to my mind the great and harmful change to the character of the setting of the listed building has already occurred.

Clearly the fact that the quarry is temporary and will return to agricultural land in a fairly short period is a major consideration and greatly mitigates against the harm that is occurring.”

- 8.74 Historic England now comments that the proposed 17-year extension of time to quarry operations will mean a continued harmful impact on the setting of Woodsford Castle. It will also require the processing plant and silt lagoon, which have already been constructed within the existing quarry.
- 8.75 Historic England comments that there are complex inter-relationships between the three current planning applications and that the Inspector's previous appeal decision is relevant to all three applications. It considers that the concurrent existence of the existing quarry and its north eastern extension is the most harmful cumulative aspect of the proposal, and one which the Council will need to carefully consider given the Inspector's findings on the overall harmful heritage impact of the quarry.

Policy

- 8.76 Historic England advises that Woodsford Castle is a Grade I listed building, and that the National Planning Policy Framework advises under paragraph 199 (now paragraph 212) that the more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation.
- 8.77 It comments that the Inspector in the 2018 appeal considered that the 2005 consent for quarrying operations resulted in substantial harm to the setting of the castle and it considers that the proposals to extend the lifespan of the quarry will perpetuate those harmful effects, but the impact will be limited and firmly within the bracket of less than substantial harm.
- 8.78 It advises that the Council will therefore need to carefully consider, under the terms of NPPF paragraph 202 (now paragraph 215), whether there are wider benefits associated with the proposals that outweigh the harm to the significance of Woodsford Castle that Historic and others, have identified.

Recommendation

- 8.79 Historic England states that it has concerns regarding the application(s) on heritage grounds.
- 8.80 In determining this application it advises that the Council should have regard to the statutory duty under section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Additional Comments following Reg. 25 Submission

- 8.81 Historic England has subsequently offered further comments on the applications. It referred to its previous comments set out above.
- 8.82 It notes that the applicant in their Regulation 25 submission clarified that the western end of existing quarry has been restored to agricultural land. It advises that it therefore presumes that there will be no further extraction in this area. It also notes that the applicant has confirmed that the excavation of the eastern reserves will not take place concurrently with the proposed north eastern extension of the quarry.
- 8.83 Whilst it welcomes these clarifications, it advises that it continues to be of the view that the processing plant and conveyor and silt lagoon will cause a degree of harm to the setting of the castle, but that the harm is less than substantial.
- 8.84 It refers to comments from the applicant stating their opinion that the north eastern and eastern reserves are too far from the castle to harm its setting. It confirms that it agrees that there would be no direct visual impact, with the setting is defined as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. It does however note that the surroundings of Woodsford Castle would change, from open rural fields to quarry operations, albeit for a fixed period of time. Consequently, it considers that the continued operations of the quarry will have a modest, adverse, impact on how Woodsford Castle is experienced, i.e. that there will be minor harm to the setting of the Grade I listed building.
- 8.85 It advises again that paragraph 205 (now paragraph 212) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that the more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation and that Woodsford Castle is a heritage asset of the very highest significance.
- 8.86 It further advises that the Council must therefore give considerable weight to the conservation ("The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance") of Woodsford Castle when carrying out NPPF paragraph 208's 'balancing exercise' of weighing the harm we have identified against any wider public benefit associated with the proposals, now set out in paragraph 215.

Recommendation

- 8.87 Historic England still has concerns regarding the application(s) on heritage grounds. In determining the application it again advises that the Council must have regard to the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Landmark Trust

- 8.88 The Landmark Trust has objected to all three planning applications, i.e. Planning Application Refs. P/FUL/2023/04753, P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761.

- 8.89 The Landmark Trust is a historic buildings preservation charity which rescues and restores historically or architecturally important buildings which it lets for short stay holidays. It owns the Grade 1 Woodsford Castle which, it states, even amongst Landmark's portfolio, is a highly unusual property. It states that this is in part due to its surroundings where its presence is an impressive reminder of what an important building it once was and still is.

- 8.90 It states that any changes to the immediate surrounding land use can hugely impact the historical context of the building. For Woodsford Castle, it states that this is even more important due to its proximity to the highway. This allows many more people the opportunity to see the building when driving, walking or riding by. This hugely contributes to its significance within the open rural landscape.

- 8.91 It comments that at the planning appeal in 2018 the Planning Inspector recognised the harm caused to the significance of Woodsford Castle by the original quarry consent. The comments made at the time are relevant to the current applications. The Inspector commented that:

"Whether or not any harm/balance was considered in the original application, the existing quarry clearly has a major harmful impact on the character of the land that forms an important part of the setting of the listed building that must be taken into account when considering what is proposed for the appeal site. To my mind the harm would, in terms of the National Policy Framework, be categorised as 'substantial harm'."

- 8.92 The harm is important the Landmark Trust state, because the change to the character of the land caused by the quarry spoils the approach to the listed building from the south. They contend that it does not matter whether or not the listed building can be seen from the footpaths or land generally, because it is the industrial nature of the character of the quarry that is in one's mind after passing through the quarry workings, which causes considerable harm to the rural character of the approach to the listed building across fields.

- 8.93 They comment that additional quarry workings, bunds and silt lagoons, will make a further negative contribution in terms of the character of the area.
- 8.94 They state that the Planning Inspector in 2018, considered that the 2005 consent for quarrying operations caused substantial damage to the setting of the castle and they comment that it will continue to suffer the harmful effects of quarrying activities for many years to come. The Trust requests that all the land to the south of the castle should be restored with bunds removed, top soil replaced and planted, footpaths and hedges reinstated with any visible quarrying evidence removed. They also request that regular noise monitoring be undertaken with results published monthly. They states that currently, due to the poor maintenance of conveyer belts the quarry operations result in an audible friction-related sound, characterized by a consistent and high-pitched squeaking noise which, when combined with the very audible reversing warnings of vehicles, further destroys the rural setting.

Ramblers Association/Dorset Ramblers

- 8.95 Dorset Ramblers have commented that Footpath S60/2 runs immediately to the north of the site west of Watery Lane. They have concerns that the works in the vicinity will impact on the visual and aural amenity of users of that path. They note that the Planning Application Supporting Statement mentions this path and states (at paragraph 3.14) that
- “A public rights of way statement is not included as no significant adverse impacts on the transient users of any footpath have been identified. There are no rights of way within the extension site.”*
- 8.96 They ask that, should planning permission be granted that adequate screening be provided, as they consider that the bunds on the site do not contribute to the quality of the landscape, and that further mitigation is needed in the form of tree and hedge planting. The footpath they comment forms part of a useful circular route from Frome Bridge, taking in Woodsford Castle. They share the concerns raised by the Landmark Trust about the impact on the setting of the castle of the combined quarry works in the vicinity.
- 8.97 They also the comment that the Planning Application Supporting Statement (paragraph 3.15) also mentions that the restoration proposals include the provision of a right of way running broadly north to south over land to the east of Watery Lane, linking two existing public footpaths. They welcome this proposal that will improve access. They note that the British Horse Society (BHS) in its comments (see below) has suggested that this route should be a bridleway rather than a footpath so that it is available to horse riders and cyclists as well as pedestrians. They support this suggestion provided that a sufficient width is provided to support such shared use and that the surface is suitable for all users.

- 8.98 Dorset Ramblers also concur with the point made by Knightsford Parish Council that the opportunity should be taken to resolve the problem of the “missing” path, S60/1, which appears on the definitive map but is not useable on the ground since there is no bridge over the River Frome to the west of Frome Bridge. This they comment is outside the application site but could be paid for by a section 106 contribution in the event that the application is approved.

British Horse Society

- 8.99 The British Horse Society has asked whether the proposed footpath across the reinstated site to the east of Watery Lane could be upgraded to Public Bridleway status. This would significantly enhance offroad riding opportunities in an area which has a large horse population and very few bridleways.
- 8.100 They comment, to put this request in to context, that according to the DEFRA Horse Passport figures, there are 2,090 horses registered to addresses in the DT2 postcode, and evidence suggest that horse passports are registered close to where they are kept so that their owners can ride and care for them. They further comment that as roads get busier the number of incidents between cars and horses has also risen with 11 incidents in 2020, 36 in 2021, and 62 in 2022 and they believe that these recorded figures only represent 10% of the actual number of incidents.
- 8.101 They additionally comment that if upgrade the proposed footpath, and any other footpaths on the site, to bridleway status, it would allow not only horse riders but in addition cyclists to make use of the route.

Network Rail

- 8.102 Network Rail have advised that because the site is accessed via the Woodsford (No.38) level crossing, they are concerned that it is likely to increase the number of HGVs using the crossing. It is also concerned about damage caused to the level crossing decking due to sand dropped from lorries as the site exit is located within a short distance.
- 8.103 They otherwise have no concerns in relation to mining and surface extraction works.

Bournemouth Water Ltd

- 8.104 Have advised that they have no comment to make on the application.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.105 Bournemouth Water have again advised that they have no comment to make on the application.

Dorset Council - Landscape Officer

- 8.106 The Landscape Officer has commented in relation to all three applications that when combined, their cumulative impacts will spread over all three areas of land at the same time. In total these three areas would become a very

substantial and continuous area, that will expand the physical area of the impacts as well as the duration over which Woodsford Quarry is experienced.

- 8.107 They further comment that it will include areas of land that are actively being worked as well as parcels of land where works have been started and then paused whilst work moves to another area, sometimes for a period of years.
- 8.108 They note that this approach was promoted during the site allocation process at the time the MSP were being prepared. They comment, despite this, that it remains important to ensure that the visual and landscape impacts of the sites are reduced as far as possible in order to ensure that they can be limited to an acceptable level.
- 8.109 In order to reduce the landscape impacts of these proposals to an acceptable level, they advise that it will be essential that effective phased restoration is undertaken on as much of the sites and as soon as possible.
- 8.110 In relation to the extension application they comment that the site is an allocated site (Site AG4) within the MSP and they make the following detailed comments.
- 8.111 With regard to the overall layout of the site it is to be worked and restored within the division of the existing defined parcels of land resulting in a series of water bodies at the restoration stage. The overall scheme has been designed in a sympathetic and appropriate manner and that the principles shown in the proposed overall site layout respect and retain the historic field boundary pattern. The retention of these boundaries will help to visually 'break up' the expanses of new water bodies created both from the views along the valley floor and from more elevated, distant views over the site.
- 8.112 There are nevertheless some concerns over the details of the proposed scheme. In relation to the restoration proposals, more boundary planting is required in certain areas to help break up, soften and screen views of the large new waterbodies. The requirement for enhancement of boundary planting and appropriate new hedgerow and woodland screen planting is also specifically raised in the Policy relating to allocation AG4 in the MSP.
- 8.113 There are long lengths of Watery Lane (on both sides of the road), where mitigation planting is solely limited to relying on the existing roadside hedgerows. In winter, when not in leaf, the views through these hedgerows can often be quite open.
- 8.114 Mixed native deciduous 'copse' type planting should be extended along these stretches of road to the back of the existing hedgerows to create appropriate new landscape features and help bolster the effectiveness of these boundaries. These additional new planting areas should comprise of a mix of appropriate native tree and shrub planting. Full details of the proposed planting will be required for approval by the local authority.
- 8.115 The additional planting does not necessarily need to be just one long continuous and uniform belt of new woodland. It would be acceptable to allow some breaks in the new woodland behind the hedgerow, however it does need to be far more substantial than is currently shown on the concept restoration plans. The best design would be to allow some reduction and lessening of the

additional woodland cover behind areas where the existing roadside hedges are at their strongest and thickest.

- 8.116 Additional screen planting is not required on the southern sections of Watery Lane where the road runs adjacent to field parcels that are intended to be returned to agricultural use as part of the restoration scheme. Here they advise that the retention of the existing roadside hedgerows alone is sufficient. This is likely to still permit glimpsed winter views across the adjacent fields. This is acceptable as the restored adjacent agricultural fields will continue to reinforce and respect the existing, pre-development, landscape character of the site.
- 8.117 The reasons for softening and partially screening views across proposed new lakes is that the large new water bodies will create a significant change in the landscape character of this site which is not fully acknowledged by the submitted LVIA.
- 8.118 Within the Landscape Character Assessment, large scale lakes are not identified as a natural (or culturally historic) features of this landscape.

Woodsford to Moreton Road Boundary

- 8.119 The eastern part of the Woodsford to Moreton Road adjacent to the proposed new angling lake near Cuckoo Mead is heavily reliant on the existing roadside hedgerow for mitigation. This boundary should be bolstered with additional appropriate woodland, copse, and tree belt planting as part of the final restoration scheme for the site.

New Conveyor Belt Road Tunnel

- 8.120 It is proposed to construct a tunnel beneath the Woodsford to Moreton Road in order to allow the new conveyor to operate between the two sites on either side of this road. This conveyor will be in place for the entire duration of the north eastern extension workings and therefore needs to be carefully designed.
- 8.121 Full details are required for the design of this new element, including details of any hedgerow removal of the existing roadside hedges and the proposals for future restoration.

Northern Boundary Treatment

- 8.122 The 'Sculpture by the Lakes' tourist attraction is located in close proximity to the northeast boundary of the extension site. This is one of the highly sensitive receptors that are specifically identified in the Policy AG4 relating to this allocated site in The Minerals Plan.
- 8.123 Additional boundary planting should be added along the northeast boundary of the site in order to help screen and soften views into the site from the north, with additional native copse planting with appropriate native tree and shrub planting.

Site Vehicle Access Points and Haul Roads

- 8.124 On final restoration it should be ensured, by condition that the site access junction is broken up and removed, with all verges and hedgerows re-instated. If future access points are to be kept these should be scaled down and designed as 'low key' agricultural or Conservation maintenance standard scale

access points. Again, this should form part of the Condition and final detailed restoration plans.

Detailed Design

- 8.125 The restoration scheme plan is at a concept level. Full details are required for the proposed restoration schemes, planting and maintenance.
- 8.126 The proposed screening bunds are not dimensioned or slope gradients shown, but there is reference to these being maintained at a height not exceeding 3m. These details should be confirmed and it may be that a Condition is required to limit the height of perimeter and storage bunds.
- 8.127 The creation of a new footpath link to join the existing PROWs that currently end just adjacent to the northwest and southeast 'red line' boundaries of the site will be a significant benefit in enhancing public access along this specific part of the Frome Valley.

Additional Comments following Reg. 25 Submission

- 8.128 Following the formal submission of additional information as an Addendum to the original LVIA the Landscape officer has submitted the following additional comments.
- 8.129 The June 2024 LVIA Addendum gives a full assessment of the likely cumulative impacts of the three adjacent allocated Minerals sites;- AG4, AG5 and AG6. The Cumulative assessment has given regard to the scheme details for all three sites, based on the most recent information that was available for each of the respective recent planning applications covering each site.
- 8.130 The June 2024 Addendum information also gives greater detail and understanding of the changes associated with this specific Woodsford Northeast extension proposal. The Consultants have directly responded to the points raised the previous Landscape Officer comments and provided additional information requested in those comments.

ES Ch11 LVIA Second Addendum April 2024

- 8.131 With regard to the LVIA Second Addendum which focusses on the cumulative Impacts of the adjacent sites the Landscape Officer has submitted the following comments.
- 8.132 They agree with the findings of the Second LVIA Addendum in that the various cumulative Landscape and Visual Impacts of the above combination of active sites would not lead to a significant overall further increase in the level of adverse impacts experienced by the relevant receptors.
- 8.133 Some additional measures, such as enhanced restoration planting, have also been undertaken in the updated Addendum proposals that will also help to reduce localised and Cumulative Impacts of the development.

ES Ch11 LVIA Third Addendum April 2024

- 8.134 With regard to the LVIA Third Addendum the Landscape Officer advises as follows:
- 8.135 The site a large-scale site that will impact on the existing landscape character. However, as an allocated site within the Minerals Plan, the principle of this type

of development here is accepted and with the appropriate mitigation measures in place it will be possible to reduce the overall landscape and visual impacts of the development to an acceptable level.

- 8.136 Some of the points raised in their previous comments have been addressed as part of the LVIA Third Addendum, although there are still several outstanding points of design detail that will require further clarification and agreement upon.

Revised Restoration Plan dwg. No. W26_LAN_008 Rev A

- 8.137 With regards to their previous comments requesting additional structural landscape planting along the Watery Lane and 'Woodsford to Moreton' Road boundaries, they advise that this has now been added to the revised restoration plan.

- 8.138 The LVIA Third Addendum gives several reasons why the northeast boundary to the minerals site will not receive additional planting. The arguments put forward are accepted and they are satisfied that there would not be undue extra impacts during the operational or restoration periods with the latest revised planting proposals.

Tunnel and restoration landform, stream beneath the Woodsford to Moreton Road

- 8.139 There are still no specific details for this element of the scheme. Further, detailed drawings for both the temporary conveyor crossing and the final restoration culvert/bridge will be required. The approach that has been used on the previous phase would not be appropriate or acceptable here. The previously installed culvert includes temporary concrete barriers, replacement hedge planted too close to road, exposed concrete culvert edges, small sections of very tight radius full face kerbing etc. Unlike the previous tunnel, the proposed new tunnel beneath the Woodsford to Moreton Road will ultimately form a permanent feature.

- 8.140 From a review of the Composite Restoration Plan it appears that the existing culvert beneath the Woodsford to Higher Woodsford Road would not be required to be retained within the final restoration scheme and would therefore not form a permanent feature.

Restoration Scheme Access points and tracks

- 8.141 The LVIA Third Addendum provides some useful additional information on where the site access points and site tracks/haul roads are likely to be located. The details of the proposed new access points including the full extent of hedgerow removal are required.

- 8.142 As proposed in the LVIA Third Addendum the submission of this additional information can be addressed by condition.

- 8.143 Of greatest concern, in terms of long-term Landscape Impacts, is that it can be ensured that the access points are fully restored, including full and appropriate hedgerow reinstatement on final completion of the restoration scheme. Access points and all associated hardstanding, kerbs etc. should be removed entirely on completion of the restoration scheme.

- 8.144 If there is a justified need for the retention of any access points, then the 'HGV/Quarry scale' accesses that will have been constructed as part of the mineral workings phases should be removed and replaced with smaller scale, low key designs and surfacing, fencing, gates etc. more appropriate to this rural setting. This can be addressed by condition.

Detailed Planting Plans, schedules etc. for Restoration schemes

- 8.145 With regards to previous comment regarding the requirement for full details for each phase of the restoration; the response within the LVIA Third Addendum LVIA states that the LEMP is a live document that will be revised at each annual restoration review meeting as the development progresses. Individual landscape detailed drawings and specifications will be drawn up for agreement with the MPA and other stakeholders prior to the restoration of each phase of working.

- 8.146 This is acceptable and the requirement to provide the annual LEMP restoration reviews, and relevant full restoration landscape details as each restoration phase becomes imminent should be secured by Condition. Each detailed restoration phase would need to be in accordance with the general restoration principles shown on the revised Restoration Plan.

Topsoil and Subsoil bunds

- 8.147 The t LVIA Third Addendum has provided further information and dimensions, slope gradients etc for the topsoil and subsoil bunds. These are appropriate and the requirement to accord with these can be covered by a condition.

Dorset Council – Tree Officer

- 8.148 The Tree Officer initially advised that no arboricultural information has been supplied with Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, although they also noted that the submitted Ecological Impact Assessment suggests only one tree, an Oak (Tree T1 Oak in the centre of Field F5) is scheduled for removal, and that whilst the submitted plans indicate a buffer between the mineral extraction area and existing tree/hedgerow features, detailed arboricultural information, including a tree survey, arboricultural impact assessment, tree protection plan and arboricultural method statement should be supplied to support the planning application.

- 8.149 They advised that field boundary hedgerows support a relatively high number of veteran trees, and consequently that a Provisional Tree Preservation Order TPO/2024/0013 has been served covering the proposed extension area.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.150 They advised following a site meeting with the planning agent and arboricultural consultant it was agreed that an initial scoping survey of the site would be undertaken focusing on constraints posed by mature and veteran trees with a diameter of 500mm or more. Detailed assessments covering all trees could then be conditioned and tied into each phase if consent is granted.
- 8.151 They advised that the preliminary survey identified a number of trees which would be impacted by the present submitted proposals:

- 2x A1 category trees - excavation within RPA of tree. Survey recommends movement of excavation location or tree removed and compensated;
 - 1x B1 category tree – remove;
 - 1x C1 category tree – remove;
 - 10x B1 category tree- excavation within RPA of tree. Survey recommends movement of excavation location or tree removed and compensated; and
 - 2x B1 category trees & 1x B1 category Group – potential harm from placement of bunds within RPA.
- 8.152 This did not include the potential impact to trees smaller than the 500mm that were not surveyed.
- 8.153 They further advised that four veteran trees have been identified on site and that it appeared they have been provided with the maximum root protection area detailed within BS 5837:2012 of 15m. However, they have advised is not sufficient and must be increased to accommodate an extended buffer zone in line with government standing advice, “Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions” which states that:
- “For ancient or veteran trees (including those on the woodland boundary), the buffer zone should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5 metres from the edge of the tree’s canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree’s diameter. This will create a minimum root protection area.*
- 8.154 They therefore advised that where the assessment shows other impacts are likely to extend beyond this distance, the proposal is likely to need a larger buffer zone. Where possible, a buffer zone should contribute to wider ecological networks, and should be part of the green infrastructure of the area.
- 8.155 They advised that the placement of bunds within the Root Protection Areas (RPAs) is not acceptable and that the Storage of spoil must be placed outside of root protection areas and buffer zones to prevent long term damage through soil compaction.
- 8.156 They recommended that a revised set of plans be provided demonstrating the constraints identified have been considered and appropriately mitigated.
- Additional Comments following 2nd Reg 25 Consultation*
- 8.157 The requested arboricultural information was subsequently submitted and the Tree Officer has advised is acceptable, subject to the inclusion of conditions in relating to the submission for approval of a scheme for the protection of the retained trees in each phase, including phase specific tree protection plan(s) (TPP) and a phased detailed arboricultural method statement (AMS) as part of the detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).

Dorset Council – Archaeology

- 8.158 The Archaeology Officer advises that the submitted Archaeological Impact Assessment is acceptable and includes acceptable . They consequently advise, if consent is granted, that the mitigation measures should be secured by condition to include arrangements for archaeological observation and

recording to take place during groundworks, including fieldwork and publication of the details of any findings.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.159 They have advised that their previous comments still apply.

Dorset Council – Minerals & Waste Policy

- 8.160 The Minerals and Waste Policy Team have advised as follows:

Aggregate Supply and Demand

- 8.161 The MS (Policy AS1) commits to maintaining a sand and gravel landbank of at least 7 years, based on the “current agreed local annual supply requirement” - this is derived from the annually produced Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA).
- 8.162 The most recent LAA is the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset 13th Local Aggregate Assessment 2013 - 2023. It records that the average of the last 10 years of sales of land-won sand and gravel (from 2013 to 2023) is 1.30 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) a decrease from the 2022 figure of 1.36 mtpa.
- 8.163 At the end of 2023, there were approximately 11.5 million tonnes of permitted sand and gravel reserves in Dorset. (The term 'sand and gravel' refers to the total reserve, including both Poole Formation (soft) sand and River Terrace (sharp) sand and gravel.)
- 8.164 Using the most recent available 10-year average of sales (i.e. recorded production in Dorset and BCP) (1.30 mtpa) this would last 8.9 years if no further permissions were granted:
- 8.165 As required by Policy AS2 of the MS the Mineral Planning Authority also monitors separate landbanks for Poole Formation and River Terrace aggregate. This is done through monitoring sales from quarries which produce primarily one type of aggregate or the other.
- 8.166 At the end of 2024 reserves of Poole Formation were 5.3 mt and River Terrace were 4.2 mt. Approximately 0.72 mt of Poole Formation sand (71% of total sales), and approximately 0.3 mt of River Terrace (29% of total sales) aggregate, were sold in 2024.
- 8.167 The ten year average sales figures from 2015 to 2024 are 0.79 mtpa for Poole Formation and 0.45 mtpa for River Terrace. If these sales figures are applied to the reserve figures, they indicate that while the River Terrace landbank remains well above 7 years, the Poole Formation landbank has slipped below 7 years.
- Poole Formation: $5.32 \text{ mt (reserves)} / 0.79 \text{ mt (10 year average to 2022)} = 6.73 \text{ years}$
- River Terrace: $4.20 \text{ mt (reserves)} / 0.45 \text{ mt (10 year average to 2022)} = 9.35 \text{ years}$
- 8.168 Based on expected sales projected from the previous year's sales. the current landbank for sand and gravel (as of 9th June 2025) is estimated to be 7.3 years:

- 8.169 The Poole Formation landbank alone is estimated to be 6.3 years and the River Terrace landbank alone is estimated to be 9.1 years:

With Additional Permissions

- 8.170 The Woodsford proposal, if permitted, is estimated to yield some 3.0 million tonnes (mt) of River Terrace sand and gravel. The adjacent proposed quarries at Hurst Farm and Station Road on the Moreton Estate are estimated to yield some 11.5 mt of aggregate, comprising approximately 4.0 mt of River Terrace sand and gravel and 7.5 mt of Poole Formation sand.
- 8.171 If both applications are permitted, an indication of the effect on the landbank would be that the Landbank with Hurst Farm and Station Road, and Woodsford permissions would be 19.4 years. For Poole Formation alone it would be 16.2 years and for the River Terrace alone it would be 24.9 years.

Comments

- 8.172 The fact that the sites are allocated establishes the principle of mineral extraction. It is expected that, as shown above, should both applications be permitted the landbank for both River Terrace and Poole Formation will be well in excess of 7 years. Planning Policy Guidance on minerals makes it clear that there is no maximum landbank level and each application for minerals extraction must be considered on its own merits regardless of the length of the landbank. However, where a landbank is below the minimum level as is estimated for Poole Formation sand, this may be seen as a strong indicator of urgent need.
- 8.173 It is noted also that other Poole Formation quarries on the Puddletown Road have limited reserves remaining, strengthening the need for new sources of Poole Formation sand. With the closure of sites such as Chard Junction Quarry in the west, Woodsford is currently providing much of Dorset's River Terrace supply. This is likely to be an ongoing trend into the future.
- 8.174 It is accepted that there is a need in terms of aggregate supply, particularly for Poole Formation sand, subject to clearly demonstrating that the level of extraction can be justified and any impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.
- 8.175 The Minerals and Waste Policy Team have subsequently provided further updated landbank figures, details of which are set out in paragraphs 16.2 to 16.8 below.

Dorset Council – Natural Environment Team

- 8.176 The Natural Environment Team note that the Environment Agency uphold their objection and recommend refusal. They comment that this is in part based on the underlying uncertainty about impacts on the River Frome SSSI and Hurst Heath SNCI and the associated ecological interests of these designated sites, from the Woodsford Quarry north eastern extension application and the adjacent Hurst Farm and Station Road application (Ref. P/FUL/2023/03982).
- 8.177 They highlight that the potential impact to the rare heath lobelia community arises from the proposed groundwater management proposals, and in particular the proposed dewatering. They advise that heath lobelia occurs at only seven sites confined to southern England, and that its proximity to the site in this case is within the zone of influence of the application site and should

therefore be given consideration in the ecological assessment. They further advise that given the vulnerable state of the species, it is important to demonstrate that the success of any proposed mitigation, but that this is currently uncertain as set out in the comments from the Environment Agency and Natural England.

- 8.178 The Natural Environment Team further comments that the ecological surveys undertaken have recorded a range of ecological receptors associated with the site. The hedgerow network is identified as supporting European Protected Species, namely Hazel dormice and a wide assemblage of bats including some of the rarest species. Whilst the hedgerow network will be retained, there is some uncertainty that as the phasing progresses, access will need to be created involving the removal of sections of hedgerow. This may necessitate a mitigation licence, where this is not required, it is proposed that Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) will be put in place.
- 8.179 They comment that the list of RAMs included in the Environmental Statement ecology chapter are examples and not an exhaustive list, and consequently that it would be advisable to secure a more detailed mitigation strategy for dormice and all relevant protected wildlife for the authority to approve prior to each phase commencing. For dormice, they advise that this should include a careful search for nests, hand removal of vegetation overseen by an Ecological Clerk of Works, even for hedgerows where the survey did not confirm the presence of dormice. Additionally, they advise that more detail regarding the protection of veteran trees within the hedgerows will also be needed. Whilst it is understood that gaps created in hedgerows will eventually be replanted, they advises that it would be desirable to see the recorded sections of gappy hedges planted up well in advance of any removal. In addition, they advise that protecting identified smaller class specimens such as oaks against hedge cutting would permit their growth to mature trees and this measure should be incorporated into a final Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP).
- 8.180 With regard to the hedgerows, they additionally comment that their creation and management should be specifically designed for dormice and bats with management and monitoring set out in the LEMP. Planting for dormice should include honeysuckle to provide favoured nesting material. For bats and Greater horseshoe in particular, they recommend that new hedges should be broad (3-6m across) with an average height of 3m. Hedgerow trees should be dotted along the length of hedges which should be managed to create tall, bushy structures, ideally with a broad base of between 3 and 6 metres to provide sheltered flight paths for bats, and encouraging young saplings to grow on into hedgerow trees will provide shelter and feeding perches.
- 8.181 The Natural Environment Team welcomes the proposals in the submitted Outline Landscape and Ecological Management Plan to retain approximately 2m of uncut margin to hedgerows, but that in the final version of the LEMP it would be desirable to see this as a minimum given the farmland birds recorded during surveys and the benefits this would provide for birds (seed, invertebrates, structure for nesting), small mammals (e.g., hibernating dormice) and under-recorded brown hares.

8.182 They also welcome the intention to seed the bunds although they advise that this does not appear to have been carried forward from the Ecological Impact Assessment into the LEMP, and they comment that seeding on low fertility soil would create more open swards with barer areas.

8.183 Finally, they the Natural Environment Team expresses concern about the inclusion of fishing lakes within the restoration plan which also includes wildlife waterbodies. They express support for potential recreational after-uses such as walking, bird watching and possibly wild swimming, but they advise that the proposed angling and wildlife lakes are not complementary and introduce concerns regarding biosecurity and ecological integrity of wildlife lakes, and they advise that this aspect of the application should be reconsidered.

Dorset Council – Highways Officer

8.184 Have confirmed that they have no objection. They comment that there is no identifiable increase in traffic generation as a result of the proposal and the transport assessment demonstrates that it will result in no material harm to the transport network or to highway safety.

8.185 They also comment that no new access will be constructed and that the original site access has been functioning since 2007 and the existing quarry site access infrastructure will be used. The Highway Authority therefore has no objection subject to conditions requiring the continuation of road sweeping and the checking on a regular basis for any type of damage in and around the entrance to the site, and for any defects to be repaired caused by vehicle movements coming to and from the site.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

8.186 As the amended plans do not have any detrimental impact to the transport network or to highway safety, the Highway Authority has No Objection.

Dorset Council – Public Rights of Way

8.187 The Public Rights of Way team have confirmed that the proposed works are located in the vicinity of the Public Right of Way set in paragraph 7.6 above .

8.188 They advise that they have no objection to the proposed development. They further advise that throughout the duration of the development the full width of the public bridleway must remain open and available to the public, with no materials or vehicles stored on the route.

8.189 Any temporary closures will need to be agreed with Public Rights of Way team before any works commence. The applicants must ensure that any required consent are first obtained.

Dorset Council – Conservation Officer

8.190 Have advised that the proposed scheme has been assessed, in relation to perceived impacts on encompassing heritage assets, considered of special architectural/ historical significance, and their associated settings to which, from a conservation perspective, impact is considered unlikely and, therefore, in principle, no concern is raised.

- 8.191 They have expressed concern about any increase in HGV movements (although none is proposed) and the impact this might have on the future structural integrity of both Frome Bridge and Hurst (South) Bridge.
- 8.192 They advise that a conclusion of less than substantial harm might be considered appropriate with regard the scheme's impact on identified designated heritage assets. They further advise that their conclusion is reliant on an understanding that there will be provision of a suitable planting scheme, as intimated on supporting indicative plans. They state that the area exhibiting most concern is identified as the Phase 8 extent of the proposed scheme to which the natural boundary treatment proposed, to the west, is described as comprising 'well established and proposed tree, hedge and woodland planting'. They comment that further detail of the planting is required in terms species, scale and density, but that these should be native and of a matching type consistent with the existing species on the site.
- 8.193 They comment that reference is made to the evidential lack of surviving water meadow earthworks in the submitted Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment which is a welcome inclusion based on the sensitivity of such early water meadow systems.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.194 They have advised that their previous comments still apply.

Dorset Council – Environmental Health

- 8.195 The Noise and Vibration report states that the noise limits, in line with mineral planning guidance, as set out in table 9 of the report, should be attached to any planning permission and controlled by condition. I would recommend that this is done.

Noise Management Plan

- 8.196 Para 1.1 of this document states that it will be continually adapted and updated, by a competent and appropriately trained person. Any changes to this document must be approved by the local authority.
- 8.197 Para 5.2 states that, on receipt of a valid complaint, noise monitoring may be undertaken to establish if operational noise limits have been exceeded.
- 8.198 This monitoring must be taken by a suitably experienced or qualified operative.

Dorset Council – Flood Risk

Flood Risk to the Development

- 8.199 Advised that the applicant's flood risk assessment details the various sources of flood risk to the site and that the flood risk to the site is considered to be acceptable.

Flood Risk from the Development

- 8.200 They advised that the flood risk assessment describes how surface water runoff and groundwater will be managed on site. It states that water will be collected and directed for use on site to assist with the settlement ponds and other extraction processes. Because of the managed nature of the site with regards to surface water and groundwater, after use it will be pumped off site

to the river Frome (main river). They advised that a licence is required from the Environment Agency to dewater and discharge water from the settling ponds and that the pumping/discharge rates will need to be agreed with the Environment Agency based on current flow rates in the River Frome.

- 8.201 They considered that the future restoration of the area to incorporate lakes and standing water areas is also acceptable. They comment that the discharge of excess water from the lakes (or due to some form of failure) will be conveyed to the River Frome by gravity and that there does not appear to be any development between the future lakes and the River Frome. They advised that incorporating new lakes and standing water areas generally reduces the rate and volume of surface water runoff from an area, and thereby reduces flood risk.
- 8.202 They commented that the proposed plans do not appear to indicate any new buildings or significant hardstanding areas that would have the potential for an increase in peak surface water discharge rates (and that may require a specific surface water management strategy for those aspects of the development).
- 8.203 Overall, they advised that the flood risk from the development appears to be very low.
- 8.204 Consequently, they did not object to the proposed development. I did not consider that flood, or surface water drainage, conditions set by the LLFA are relevant or required, although they advised that the Environment Agency is likely to impose license conditions regarding pumping/discharge rates from the site to the River Frome.
- 8.205 They recommended the inclusion of an Informative relating to the requirement for land Drainage Consent and possibly also an Environmental Permit.

Additional Comments following Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.206 The Flood Risk Team restated their previous comments.

Additional Comments following 2nd Reg 25 Consultation

- 8.207 The Flood Risk Team have again restated their previous comments.

Councillor Roland Tarr (Winterborne and Broadmayne Ward)

- 8.208 Has not commented on the application.

Councillor Laura Beddow (West Purbeck Ward)

- 8.209 Has commented that whilst recognising the need for minerals, the results of the cumulative impact work is crucial to these applications. The increase in both housing and quarrying across crossways and Moreton is considerable and must be considered together.
- 8.210 The main concern from local residents, Councillor Beddows states is that the road network, particularly the small bridge to the east of Moreton. This road has a 60mph speed limit which relies on driver goodwill to stop and let incoming traffic across the single lane bridge.

- 8.211 The crossroads at Waddock Cross is also already risky and has seen several serious accidents. Tree loss is a concern particularly around the conveyer system, and its impact on the woods around the crossroads. Residents are keen for there to be footpath provision from the station road site to the Avenue to mitigate the risks of walking the main road (already dangerous) which will be increased by the increase in Lorries.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760

Public Consultation

- 8.212 There have been three rounds of public consultation as a result of which no representations were received from individuals.

Consultees

Moreton Parish Council

- 8.213 Has commented that the application documents are very convoluted and make reading about the existing and future Woodsford Quarries and working out whether more silt lagoons will be required very difficult.
- 8.214 It states that the majority of the documents are copies of the attachments to north eastern extension application and that it is difficult to find any reference to Hurst Farm quarry application in the submitted documents, and that proposals for housing development in the area have not been considered.
- 8.215 It considers that the proposals from the applicants for the Woodford Quarry planning applications and the adjacent Hurst Farm and Station Road planning application need to better coordinate their approach to the applications.
- 8.216 The consider that the application should be refused.

Affpuddle & Turnerspuddle Parish Council

- 8.217 Has not commented on the application, but has commented on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753. See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Knightsford Parish Council

- 8.218 Has commented that the application does not adequately describe how the area south of Woodsford Castle, which is Grade 1 listed, i.e. it's historical setting, will be restored in the immediate future and in particular that it does not describe when; stockpiles will be removed; footpaths reinstated; hedgerows planted; bunds south of the Castle removed and topsoil re-instated; how the ramps on the conveyor system will be disguised; and the provision of bunds to hide the processing area built. It also comments that the operator is not managing noise and that they have failed to properly maintain the conveyor which makes a persistent squeaking noise, which has a serious detrimental effect on the amenity of residents of Woodsford.

Active Travel England

- 8.219 Has advised that it has no comment on the application.

National Grid Electricity Transmission

- 8.220 Has advised that that they have no objection.

National Grid Gas Transmission

- 8.221 Has advised that they have are no assets that would be affected by the development and consequently they have no objection.

Environment Agency

- 8.222 Has not commented on the application.

Natural England

- 8.223 Has not commented on the application.

Historic England

- 8.224 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above, but additionally comment that the proposed 17-year extension of time to the existing quarry operations proposed, by P/VOC/2023/04760 would mean a continued harmful impact on the setting of Woodsford Castle, which is a Grade 1 listed building.
- 8.225 It considers that the concurrent existence of the existing quarry and the proposed north eastern extension would be result in a harmful cumulative impact.
- 8.226 It comments that the applicant has clarified that the existing quarry (the Western Reserves) has been restored to agricultural land, and it therefore assumes that there will be no further extraction in within the existing quarry area.
- 8.227 It considers that the continuing presence of the processing plant and conveyor and silt lagoon will cause a degree of harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, but that the harm would be less than substantial.
- 8.228 It considers that there would be no direct visual impact as a result of the north eastern extension to the setting of Woodsford Castle, although it comments that the surroundings of Woodsford Castle would change, from open rural fields to quarry operations, albeit for a fixed period of time. It considers that the continued operations of the quarry will have a modest, adverse, impact on how Woodsford Castle is experienced and that there would be minor harm to the setting of the Grade I listed building.
- 8.229 It states that paragraph 205, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that the more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation and that Woodsford Castle is a heritage asset of the very highest significance. The Council should therefore give considerable weight to the conservation of Woodsford Castle when carrying out NPPF paragraph 208's 'balancing exercise' of weighing the harm against any wider public benefit associated with the proposals.
- 8.230 Historic England accordingly has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. In determining the application it advises that the Council should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed

Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Landmark Trust

- 8.231 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Ramblers Association/Dorset Ramblers

- 8.232 Have commented that it is difficult to understand the implications for footpaths S60/4 and S60/6 of the two s.73 applications, but that should permission be granted to extend the duration of works on these sites then there will be a delay in the restoration works. They are concerned that there are two outstanding problem reports on FP S60/4 which reads as follows:

- That footpath (60/4) has been closed for well over a year, seemingly due to a dangerous wall. There has been no attempt during this time to do any remedial work to the wall and now a trench with a conveyor belt has been built over it. Accordingly ask whether there are there any plans to reinstate this path which connects with the path to Woodsford?
- That the existing pathway has been closed, with the intention that it will be re-routed. However, no new path has been provided. They quarry operator has failed to provide this.

- 8.233 Accordingly the Dorset Ramblers object to the two s.73 applications.

British Horse Society

- 8.234 Has not commented on the application, but has commented on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753. Its comments in relation to that application are set out above.

Network Rail

- 8.235 Has advised that it has no objection to the application.

Bournemouth Water Ltd

- 8.236 Has advised that it has no comment to make on the application.

Dorset Council - Landscape Officer

- 8.237 Comment that in order to make the time extension of the previously approved mineral workings areas acceptable in landscape terms there will need to be an effective programme of phased restoration works.

- 8.238 Providing the phased restoration of the existing site is completed as soon as possible for each section then they have no objection to the application.

Dorset Council – Tree Officer

- 8.239 No objection.

Dorset Council – Archaeology

8.240 Have not commented on the application.

Dorset Council – Minerals & Waste Policy

8.241 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Dorset Council – Natural Environment Team

8.242 Have not commented on the application.

Dorset Council – Highways Officer

8.243 Advise that the application would not give rise to any changes that would have any detrimental impact on the highway network. They therefore have no objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to ensuring that the highway is kept clear of any loose materials, is checked on a regular basis for any type of damage in and around the entrance to the site, and ensure that any defects are repaired caused by vehicles accessing the site.

Dorset Council – Public Rights of Way

8.244 No objection, subject the full width of the footpaths remaining open and available to the public, with no materials or vehicles stored on the route.

Dorset Council – Conservation Officer

8.245 No objection.

Dorset Council – Environmental Health

8.246 Have not commented on the application.

Dorset Council – Flood Risk

8.247 No objection, subject to the retention of any existing conditions relating to flood and drainage being retained.

Councillor Roland Tarr (Winterborne and Broadmayne Ward)

8.248 Has not commented on the application.

Councillor Laura Beddow (West Purbeck Ward)

8.249 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761

8.250 There have been three rounds of public consultation as a result of which no representations were received from individuals.

Consultees

Moreton Parish Council

8.251 Has commented that the timeline about the revised timescale for the retention and reinstatement of the silt lagoon is unclear and that the quarry operator should provide the calculations upon which they base their statements about

silt production and silt lagoon requirements, and that this take into account the operation of the adjacent Hurst Farm operation, if approved.

- 8.252 It considers that the application should be refused.

Affpuddle & Turnerspuddle Parish Council

- 8.253 Has not commented on the application, but has commented on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753. See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Knightsford Parish Council

- 8.254 Has commented that the 2019 appeal decision that granted approval for the lagoons, and the associated planning conditions, was based on them being hidden from view by 2m high bunds and to ensure that there were no stockpiles over 2m in height. Despite this the bunds in the south east corner of the site have not been constructed and the stockpiles exceed the permitted height.
- 8.255 It has also commented that the Planning Inspector in the 218 appeal was clear that the use of the silt lagoon should cease and the site reinstated by 2028.

Active Travel England

- 8.256 Has advised that it has no comment.

National Grid Electricity Transmission

- 8.257 Has advised that that they have no objection.

National Grid Gas Transmission

- 8.258 Have not commented on the application.

Environment Agency

- 8.259 Has not commented on the application.

Natural England

- 8.260 Have not commented on the application.

Historic England

- 8.261 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above. Historic England has additionally commented in relation to Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 that the existing silt lagoon was granted consent on appeal in 2018, and that it advised on the determined appeal. At that time, it states that they it was satisfied that the proposed mitigation measures had been designed to minimise the harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle but advised the plans would still have an impact on the open nature of the landscape which contributes to the setting of the Castle. It commented further that the importance of adhering to the development's time limit in order to restore the Castle's setting.

- 8.262 It further comments that the Inspector who determined the appeal agreed with their views on the impact of the proposals on the setting of the castle, and stated that the lagoon would have a 'harmful impact on the rural and open

character of the area, which is important to the setting of the listed building and the appreciation of its historic setting.’ However, because major change to the landscape had already been brought about by the existing workings, the additional impact of the proposed lagoon would be at the lower end of ‘less than substantial harm’.

- 8.263 Historic England has further commented that it advised at the time of the appeal that it would be concerned about any future applications to prolong the life of the quarry or further extend it in areas that are in closer proximity to Woodsford Castle, and that the Inspector also put considerable weight on the temporary nature of the quarry and the consequent impact on the setting of the Castle.
- 8.264 It remains concerned that the silt lagoon which is the subject of this application is located in relatively close proximity to the Grade I listed castle, and it considers its continued presence beyond the original timescale to be regrettable but acknowledges that its visual impact from public viewpoints is limited.
- 8.265 As set out above, in its comments submitted in response to Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, it considers that the continuing presence of the processing plant and conveyor and silt lagoon will cause a degree of harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, but that the harm is less than substantial.
- 8.266 It considers that the continued operations of the quarry will have a modest, adverse, impact on how Woodsford Castle is experienced and that there would be minor harm to the setting of the Grade I listed building.
- 8.267 It advises that paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) advises that the more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation and that Woodsford Castle is a heritage asset of the very highest significance. The Council should therefore give considerable weight to the conservation of Woodsford Castle when carrying out NPPF paragraph 208’s ‘balancing exercise’ of weighing the harm against any wider public benefit associated with the proposals.
- 8.268 Historic England accordingly has concerns regarding the application on heritage grounds. In determining the application it advises that the Council should bear in mind the statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Landmark Trust

- 8.269 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Ramblers Association/Dorset Ramblers

- 8.270 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 set out above. The Dorset Ramblers object to the application.

British Horse Society

- 8.271 Has not commented on the application, but has commented on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753. Its comments in relation to that application are set out above.

Network Rail

- 8.272 Have advised that they have no objection to the application.

Bournemouth Water Ltd

- 8.273 Have advised that they have no comment to make on the application.

Dorset Council - Landscape Officer

- 8.274 Comments that the development does have some significant adverse landscape and visual impacts from short sections of Footpath FP60/06. However, once the viewer is away from these specific sections of the footpath, there is mitigation of the visual impact of the silt lagoon due to hedgerows and the relatively flat nature of the immediately surrounding topography.
- 8.275 They additionally comment that there appears to be some discrepancy between the temporary perimeter bunding that has been constructed on site and what was proposed in the approved 2018 Landscaping scheme.
- 8.276 They advise that on-site, the temporary bunding along the southern edge of the silt lagoons works well, that it is relatively discrete in height and that the vegetation cover is established. They comment that eastern corner has a new bund section, but that due to this being set further into the site than the adjacent bunds its falls in height quite significantly to the north before joining the other, established, bund. This they advise appears awkward in close-up views from Footpath S60/6 and allows views over the water and silt ponds area within the site. They comment that it is not clear whether the new bund section is intended as the finished bund or whether this was still under further construction.
- 8.277 With the exception of small sections of footpath where there are glimpsed views into the silt ponds, and any operations or machinery in the area of the silt pond, they advise that the perimeter screening bunds create the most significant impacts on users of the public footpath and road to the north. Once the viewer moves away from the field containing the silt pond development other field boundaries and hedgerows do help to further soften and screen the silt pond development.
- 8.278 They further advises that the proposed extension of the operational time period for the lagoons will extend the duration of their associated adverse landscape impacts. However, they consider that the impacts will eventually be removed as this part of the development will finally be restored back to an agricultural field similar in nature and ground levels to the original land use.

8.279 They therefore advise that they have no objection to the application on landscape grounds, providing the perimeter bunding, particularly on the east corner, is reprofiled to better reflect the approved landscaping scheme.

Dorset Council – Tree Officer

8.280 No objection.

Dorset Council – Archaeology

8.281 Have not commented on the application.

Dorset Council – Minerals & Waste Policy

8.282 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

Dorset Council – Natural Environment Team

8.283 Have not commented on the application.

Dorset Council – Highways Officer

8.284 Advises that there that the application would not give rise to any changes that would have any detrimental impact on the highway network. They therefore have no objection subject to the imposition of conditions relating to ensuring that the highway is kept clear of any loose materials, is checked on a regular basis for any type of damage in and around the entrance to the site, and ensure that any defects are repaired caused by vehicles accessing the site.

Dorset Council – Public Rights of Way

8.285 No objection, subject the full width of Footpaths remaining open and available to the public, with no materials or vehicles stored on the route.

Dorset Council – Conservation Officer

8.286 No objection.

Dorset Council – Environmental Protection

8.287 Have advised that they have no comment on the application.

Dorset Council – Flood Risk

8.288 No objection, subject to the retention of any existing conditions relating to If there are existing flood and drainage.

Councillor Roland Tarr (Winterborne and Broadmayne Ward)

8.289 Has not commented on the application.

Councillor Laura Beddow (West Purbeck Ward)

8.290 See Comments for Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 set out above.

9 Policy

9.1 Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The term ‘other material considerations’ is broad in scope, encompassing all matters outside the development plan that should be considered in making a

planning decision. Whether a consideration is material in any given case depends on the circumstances and should be relevant to planning and to the making of the planning decision in question. National policies, such as those contained within the NPPF, are material considerations in planning decisions.

Development Plan

9.2 The 'Development Plan' for the site comprises:

- Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (MS) (adopted May 2014)
- Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (MSP) (adopted December 2019)
- West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (Adopted October 2015)

9.3 The relevant policies from these plan are:

9.4 Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014)

- Policy SS1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy SS2 – Identification of Sites in the Minerals Sites Plan
- Policy CC1 – Preparation of Climate Change Assessments
- Policy AS1 – Provision of Sand and Gravel
- Policy AS2 – Landbank Provision
- Policy RS1 – Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse of Minerals Development
- Policy RS2 – Retention of Plant, Machinery, and other Ancillary Development
- Policy DM1 – Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development
- Policy DM2 – Managing the Impacts on Amenity
- Policy DM3 – Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources
- Policy DM4 – Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character and the Countryside
- Policy DM5 – Biodiversity and geological interest
- Policy DM6 – Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site
- Policy DM7 – Historic Environment
- Policy DM8 – Transport and Minerals Development
- Policy DM10 – Planning Obligations

9.5 Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (2019)

- Policy MS-1: Production of Sand and Gravel
- Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension, Woodsford
- Allocation AG5: Station Road, Moreton
- Allocation AG6: Hurst Farm, Moreton

9.6 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015)

- Policy INT1 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy ENV1 – Landscape, Seascape and Sites of Geological Interest
- Policy ENV2 – Wildlife And Habitats
- Policy ENV3 – Green Infrastructure Network
- Policy ENV4 – Heritage Assets
- Policy ENV5 – Flood Risk
- Policy ENV9 – Pollution And Contaminated Land
- Policy ENV10 – The Landscape And Townscape Setting
- Policy ENV15 – Efficient And Appropriate Use Of Land
- Policy ENV16 – Amenity
- Policy COM7 – Creating A Safe And Efficient Transport Network

Relevant Material Considerations

- 9.7 In addition to the above adopted development plans, there is an emerging plan that, if adopted, would apply to the area.
- 9.8 The Dorset Council Local Plan is not expected to be adopted until 2026. This Plan will supersede the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan when it is eventually adopted. Although it is a material consideration, little weight should be given as it is in draft and has not passed examination or been adopted.
- 9.9 In addition to the statutory development plans, there are other policies that are material planning considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024), and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) issued by both Dorset Council and the former West Dorset District Council, and Guidance documents prepared by Dorset Council and the former West Dorset District Council.
- 9.10 SPDs and Guidance of relevance include:
- Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020-2025 (Dorset Council)
 - Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour, 2017 (West Dorset District Council)
 - Planning for Climate Change, 2023 (Dorset Council)
- 9.11 The NPPF¹ sets out the governments national planning policies and is an important material consideration in decision-making. Below is a list of the most relevant paragraphs, but is not exhaustive:
- Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development: Paragraph 11
 - Decision-Making: Paragraph 38, 47, 54, 55, 56, and 57
 - Building a strong and competitive economy: Paragraphs 85, and 87
 - Promoting healthy and safe communities: Paragraph 104

¹ Version dated December 2024

- Promoting sustainable transport: Paragraph 115
- Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment: Paragraphs 180, 186, 191 (a, b, and c), and 194
- Conserving and enhancing the historic environment: Paragraphs 205 and 208
- Facilitating the Sustainable Use of Minerals: Paragraphs 215, 217 (d and e), and 219 (h and i)

10 Public Sector Equalities Duty (also applies in relation to Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761)

10.1 As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

10.2 In considering the merits of this planning application, officers have taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. We do not consider that there will be any material impact on anyone with protected characteristics.

11 Human Rights(also applies in relation to Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761)

11.1 The provisions of the Human Rights Act and principles contained in the Convention of Human Rights have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report. The articles and protocols of particular relevance are:

- Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.
- Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.
- The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

11.2 This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies and material planning considerations, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

12 EIA Development (also applies in relation to Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761)

12.1 The proposal is EIA Development and has been assessed under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. An Environmental Statement has been submitted as part of the application and any likely significant effects of the development on the local environment have been assessed. This is discussed in Section 14 below.

13 Habitats Regulations (also applies in relation to Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761)

- 13.1 Because the proposals have not yet been demonstrated to be acceptable in relation to the impacts on the water environment and protected species, habitats and biodiversity it is not yet possible to complete the Appropriate Assessment of the proposals and conclude that the development would not have a likely significant effect on a European site in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive and or that sufficient due regard has been had to the Council's duties under Section 40(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.
- 13.2 If the Committee is minded not to accept the Recommendation, then it would be necessary defer determination until the Appropriate Assessment has been completed, although at this stage it is unlikely that that it would be possible to do so and reach a conclusion that the impacts of the development would not have a likely significant effect that would allow it to go ahead.

14 Planning Assessment

- 14.1 The main issues arising in relation to the determination of each of the three application is as follows:

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- Whether the development is acceptable in principle, i.e. the principle of the development;
- Impact on the water environment (groundwater, flooding, the River Frome, and Moreton Stream, etc);
- Loss of BMV Agricultural Land
- Impact on Heritage;
- Impact on Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use;
- Impact on Highway Safety and Capacity
- Impact on Amenity and the Local Community (Noise, Dust, Traffic, etc);
- Impact on Ecology and the Environment;
- Restoration, Aftercare, and After-use.
- Planning Balance

Principle of the Development

- 14.2 The application site comprises one of the allocations in the MSP: AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension, Woodsford which is identified as containing approximately 2,100,000 tonnes of primarily River Terrace sand and gravel. The allocation was made, in accordance with Policy MS-1, to maintain an adequate and steady supply of sand and gravel.
- 14.3 The Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) is required to plan for the adequate and steady supply of minerals in accordance with paragraph 222 of the NPPF which states that *"it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to*

provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy, and goods that the country needs.”

- 14.4 The NPPF, in paragraph 226, advises that MPAs should maintain a landbank of at least 7 years for sand and gravel, and to maintain separate landbanks for any distinct and separate markets or types of minerals. In this case, that means one landbank for Poole Formation sand, one landbank for River Terrace sand and gravel, and one landbank for both combined. The need to maintain an adequate landbank is also recognised in Policy AS1 of the MS, which states that *“an adequate and steady supply of locally extracted sand and gravel will be provided by maintaining a landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves equivalent to at last 7 years’ worth of supply...”* A landbank only considers reserves with planning permission for extraction, and not reserves within allocations.
- 14.5 At the end of 2024, the landbank for sand and gravel (River Terrace and Poole Formation combined) was 9.5 mt or 7.68 years, based on the ten year sales average of 1.24 million tonnes. The landbank for River Terrace was 4.2 mt or 9.35 years and the landbank for Poole Formation was 5.3 mt or 6.73 years
- 14.6 Whilst this indicates that there is currently more than the minimum landbanks for River Terrace and Poole Formation combined, and for River Terrace, the Poole Formation landbank has fallen under the required 7 years.
- 14.7 Based on the expected sales projected from the previous year’s sales, the current overall landbank for sand and gravel (as of 27th August 2025) is estimated to be 7.1 years, with the River Terrace landbank alone estimated to be 8.9 years and the Poole Formation landbank alone is estimated to be 6.1 years.
- 14.8 Set against this is the fact that as there have been no new sand and gravel permissions approved so far in 2024/25 so that the estimated landbanks will have fallen. It is also known that Poole Formation sales have been declining since 2020, although they increased between 2023 and 2024. River Terrace sales have been declining since 2022.
- 14.9 Until further planning permissions are granted for extraction of further sand and gravel mineral sites, both landbanks will continue to fall and overall the position is that Dorset Council needs to consider consenting further reserves.
- 14.10 The Woodsford north-eastern extension proposal, if permitted, is estimated to yield 3.0 million tonnes (mt) of River Terrace sand and gravel. The adjacent proposed quarries at Hurst Farm and Station Road on the Moreton Estate are estimated to yield 11.5 mt of aggregate, comprising approximately 4.0 mt of River Terrace sand and gravel and 7.5 mt of Poole Formation sand.
- 14.11 The fact that the sites are allocated establishes the principle of mineral extraction. It is expected, as shown above, should the applications for both sites be approved, that the landbank for both River Terrace and Poole Formation will be in excess of 7 years. It should be noted that Paragraph: 084 of the Planning Policy Guidance on Minerals makes it clear that there is no maximum landbank level and each application for minerals extraction is to be considered on its own merits regardless of the length of the landbank.

However, where a landbank is below the minimum level, this may be seen as a strong indicator of urgent need.

- 14.12 It should also be noted that other Poole Formation quarries on the Puddletown Road have limited reserves remaining, strengthening the need for new sources of Poole Formation sand. With the closure of sites such as Chard Junction Quarry in West Dorset, Woodsford is currently providing much of Dorset's River Terrace supply. This is likely to be an ongoing trend into the future.
- 14.13 There is therefore a need for both sites in terms of aggregate supply, particularly for Poole Formation sand, subject to clearly demonstrating that the level of extraction can be justified and any impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated.

Context with other mineral sites in Dorset

- 14.14 There are three existing mineral sites which have produced River Terrace sands and gravels, including: the existing Woodsford Quarry; Chard Junction Quarry which is now finished and in restoration and Hurn Court Farm Quarry, which is currently the subject of an application to Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council for an extension.
- 14.15 In addition to the current application site, there is one other allocation in the MSP 2019 for River Terrace sand and gravel; Site AG2: Roeshot, Christchurch with an estimated 3,500,000 tonnes of sand and gravel. Roeshot is in the far south east of BCP and straddles the BCP/Hampshire county boundary. The Hampshire side of the Roeshot site has been permitted and is currently being worked. The BCP part of the Roeshot site is allocated in the MSP but is not expected to be brought forward for development for at least 10 years.
- 14.16 There is also an additional site at Avon Common just off the A338 in BCP which is consented and being worked although not for River Terrace sand and gravel.

Estimated Reserves

- 14.17 Within the MSP 2019, each allocation was given an "*estimated mineral resource*" figure. Woodsford north-eastern extension was estimated to have a reserve of 2,100,000 tonnes of River Terrace sand and gravel, while the application proposes the extraction of 3 million tonnes of mineral.
- 14.18 Hurst Farm on the adjacent site, which is also an allocated site, Site AG6 was estimated to have "*approximately 3,300,000 tonnes*" of sand and gravel and Station Road, Site AG5 was estimated to have "*approximately 3,100,000 tonnes*" of sand and gravel. Therefore, the total estimated mineral resource figure for the two sites (Woodsford, Hurst Farm and Station Road) within the MSP is 8.5 million tonnes.
- 14.19 This estimate of 8.5 million tonnes is significantly lower than the 14.5 million tonnes which are proposed to be extracted in the current planning applications. While it should be recognised that the figures in the MSP allocations are explicitly referred to as estimates, and not as upper limits. The difference in the estimated reserve on the Woodsford north-eastern extension is 900,000 tonnes.
- 14.20 It should also be noted there is no policy requirement for the quantity of sand and gravel extracted from the application site to be limited to the estimates in

the allocations. There are benefits from extracting a greater quantity of aggregate than originally estimated, as for each given area being dug there will be a greater yield, which means less (or delayed) impacts on other areas of Dorset. Ultimately, any sterilised mineral deliberately left in the ground, would eventually result in more mineral needing to be extracted elsewhere. Therefore, the principle of extraction of 3.0 million tonnes can be supported, provided there are no unacceptable environmental impacts.

Policy MS-1

- 14.21 Policy MS-1 of the MSP 2019 requires that proposals within allocated sites meet three criteria in order to be permitted. In short, these are:
- that applications address the Development Guidelines set out for each site in Appendix A of the MSP;
 - that they demonstrate that any adverse impacts from the development, including cumulative impacts, associated their development and operation, will be mitigated to the satisfaction of the authority; and
 - that proposals demonstrate, through a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), that the development would not adversely affect the integrity of European and Ramsar sites.
- 14.22 Appendix A contains Development Guidelines for each of the allocated minerals sites, setting out the key site-specific information relating to potential constraints, opportunities and issues to be addressed at the planning application stage. The Guidelines are intended to be guidelines, so on the one hand are not intended to be exhaustive, but equally and on the other are not intended to impose absolute criteria, but as the supporting text states, “need to be taken into account”.
- 14.23 The supporting text also makes clear, as a result of the issues set out in the Development Guidelines, and depending on the precise nature of the development proposed, that mitigation measures are likely to be required in order to prevent adverse impacts occurring. If adverse impacts are unavoidable and it is considered that they are an acceptable part of the development proposed, compensation measures may be required.
- 14.24 Key element of the Development Guidelines for the Site AG4 include the following:
- Full assessment of all ecological impacts particularly on River Frome SSSI which is in close proximity, with appropriate mitigation identified and implemented;
 - An assessment of the impacts on heritage, including designated and undesignated heritage assets on and around the site;
 - That the development of this site must ensure that the historic nature of the system of field boundaries within and around the Site is maintained as far as possible through employing parcel by parcel extraction of the mineral, and leaving the hedgerow and tree boundaries intact as far as possible;
 - This is because the site is partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3, and is adjacent to the River Frome, a Main, River, hydrological/hydrogeological assessment must be undertaken, identifying any required mitigation. This must include assessment of potential impacts on fisheries in the Frome.

- That mineral from the extension should continue to be processed at the existing plant site, with no intensification of production or simultaneous working of the current site and extension;
- Mineral should be transported from the point of extraction to the processing site via internal routes within the quarry and no external roads should be used for transport to the processing site;
- Access to the site will be via the existing access;
- Potential impacts on the footpath that runs adjacent to the site's north-west boundary to be assessed;
- Consider opportunities to increase informal recreation/public open space in the Frome Valley and to create links to existing public rights of way to be included in restoration;
- The site is BMV agricultural land and protection and appropriate management of soils is required to enable the land to retain its longer term capability;
- Potential impacts on residential amenity to be assessed, with mitigation identified where appropriate.
- The extension must take into consideration the adjacent and nearby sensitive receptors and proposals for working the sites, particularly the northern parts of the sites, must demonstrate how noise and visual impacts will be minimised to an acceptable level considered acceptable; and
- In relation to cumulative impacts resulting from the development of the site including the existing Woodsford Quarry, together with sites AG5 Station Road and AG6 Hurst Farm, including any opportunities for minimising any cumulative impacts, must be taken into consideration in any decision-making affecting this site.

14.25 In relation to the latter the Development Guideline sets out the following requirements in order to minimise cumulative impacts, particularly between AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension and AG6 Hurst Farm:

- a. Although both sites AG5 Station Road and AG6 Hurst Farm are allocated for development, AG5 Station Road should preferably be worked before AG6 Hurst Farm. This will allow AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension to be worked while AG5 Station Road is being worked;
- b. The eastern area of AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension and the western area of AG6 Hurst Farm should preferably not be worked simultaneously; and
- c. When AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension is worked, the northern and eastern parts of the site should preferably be worked before the southern/western areas to ensure that by the time work begins on AG6 Hurst Farm, then even if AG4 Woodsford Quarry Extension is not finished, the adjacent parts of the two sites would not be worked simultaneously.

14.26 In relation to the restoration of the site the Development Guideline states that as the site is within the Valley Pasture Landscape Type of the Frome River Valley, a predominantly flat landform creating a multi functional landscape where nature conservation, flood water management and agriculture combine with recreation and amenity. Post mineral working restoration must explore the opportunity to provide a large scale wetland restoration scheme hydrologically connected to the River Frome. This it states will significantly reduce phosphate,

nitrogen and sediment load in the lower reaches of the River Frome SSSI and Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar sites, and create habitat for the conservation of protected species such as otter and water vole as well as many species of wetland bird. A scheme of this scale would also contribute to flood alleviation and provide significant recreational opportunities in a largely agricultural landscape.

Conclusion

- 14.27 Paragraph 224 of the NPPF informs MPAs that “*when determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy.*”
- 14.28 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that the determination of planning applications “*must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*” In this case, the application site is allocated in the MSP 2019, and therefore the principle of mineral extraction on the site has been recognised.
- 14.29 The landbank for sand and gravel, and particularly for the River Terrace, whilst above 7 years is not significantly so. There is evidenced need for greater reserves of sand and gravel to be permitted locally in order to provide for the continued demand for aggregate in the plan area.
- 14.30 Overall, the principle of a sand and gravel quarry on the application site is supported: by its allocation in the MSP 2019; by the need to maintain a steady and adequate supply of sand and gravel; and by the great weight that the NPPF places on the benefits of mineral development in paragraphs 222 and 224.

Water Environment

- 14.31 Turning to the environmental impacts of the development by far the most important consideration is the impact on the water environment. As set out of the Development Guidelines set out in Appendix A linked to Policy MS-1 of the MSP 2019 assessment of the impact on the River Frome and the hydrological and hydrogeological impacts is a key consideration, including the impacts on fisheries in the River Frome. As also set out above significant issues have been raised by the Environment Agency and Natural England in relation to the impacts on the water environment and in particular the River Frome and the Hurst Heath SNCI.
- 14.32 In terms of policy, Policy DM3 of the MS includes the requirement to ensure the protection and maintenance of the quality, direction and rate of flow; and volume of flow of groundwater, watercourses, and all other surface water. The policy also requires that proposals at risk of causing flooding include measures to avoid or mitigate that risk.
- 14.33 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV9 states that development will not be permitted which would result in an unacceptable risk of pollution to ground water, surface water-bodies and tidal water and Policy ENV5 seeks to ensure that new development or the intensification of existing uses avoid the risk of flooding (from surface water run-off, groundwater, fluvial and coastal sources) where possible and do not generate flooding through surface water runoff and/or exacerbate flooding elsewhere.

- 14.34 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises that *“development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality...”* and paragraph 181 of the NPPF advises that *“when determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere.”*
- 14.35 The Environmental Statement submitted with the application, includes a chapter on Water Management, which is supported by a separate Flood Risk Assessment and a separate Hydrogeological Impact Assessment.
- 14.36 The assessment identifies that there is a similarity with the mineral, water environment and topography within the north eastern extension area, to the existing operations at Woodsford Quarry, and consequently that current working methods would be applied within the extension area, so that the proposals essentially represents a continuation of the current activities.
- 14.37 It identifies that groundwater levels within the application area, and its immediate vicinity, have been determined from sixteen monitoring boreholes, which have been monitored since their installation in March 1995 and that the saturated thickness of the River Terrace deposits varies temporally due to seasonal water table fluctuations. The relationship between the groundwater elevation and geology is such that in summer months the saturated mineral thickness will be less than in winter (i.e. that the groundwater levels are lower in the summer). This situation also prevails across the majority of the north eastern extension area.
- 14.38 It further identifies that the elevation of groundwater and mineral depth are such that sub-watertable working will be required and that this will be achieved by de-watering. Water within the quarry void will be managed by excavating ditches into its floor, in which it will be conveyed towards sumps, prior to discharge off-site. As detailed above, the proposals for how this will be undertaken have been amended in the course of the application to utilise the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension to create a recharge trench to prevent any the flow from the river into the extraction area.
- 14.39 Potential impacts upon the water environment have been identified and mitigation measures proposed. The assessment identifies that impacts could potentially occur in relation to both water quality and quantity. In the case of the former, it states that robust preventative measures and a documented spill response procedure will ensure that impacts on water quality are managed effectively. Suspended solids will be removed within the existing quarry by the use of flocculant and a discharge consent will be obtained from the Environment Agency to permit the water discharge.
- 14.40 The proposed phasing of mineral extraction, the assessment states will assist in reducing the potential for impact of the development on the external water environment. It will be worked in a series of ‘self-contained’ voids and restoration undertaken progressively. The creation of unlined waterbodies in the northern phases will ensure that any effects of site water management on the local water environment will be minimised.

- 14.41 The site will be restored to a combination of waterbodies, fenland and agriculture. Waterbodies and fenland will predominate on the northern half of the site with agriculture on the southern side.
- 14.42 The assessment identifies that the north eastern extension area is located wholly within Flood Zone 1 and is considered to be at low risk of flooding from all sources.
- 14.43 During mineral extraction in Phase 1b, excess water will be directed to a temporary settlement lagoon. Excess water will be discharged into the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension. Once Phase 1a has been completed, the resultant void will be used as a settlement lagoon serving all remaining phases.
- 14.44 The assessment concludes that the risk of surface water flooding to the north eastern extension area is low and that the proposals will not increase flood risk elsewhere. It therefore concludes that the proposed development will be compliant with flood-related policy, both during mineral extraction and post-restoration.
- 14.45 The Hydrogeological Impact Assessment (HIA) submitted with the application provides a detailed assessment of water environment in the north eastern extension area. It anticipates the magnitudes of all the identified potential impacts assessed as being small and that consequently mitigation measures, other than the adoption of standard good working practices, including those successfully adopted at the existing Woodsford Quarry, are not required.
- 14.46 As set above, the LLFA have advised that the applicant's assessment of flood risk is considered to be acceptable and they consequently have no objection to the application and have not recommended the inclusion of any conditions in the event that the application is approved.
- 14.47 By contrast the Environment Agency has, as set out above, made extensive comment on the application spread over four rounds of consultation. It has not changed its position and has maintained an objection due to the risk to the water environment, notably the River Frome SSSI, and the associated impacts on fisheries and biodiversity and also because of the risk to the adjacent Hurst Heath SNCI. The additional information and proposed mitigation outlined in the most recent submissions from the applicant do not overcome the Agency's initially stated objections and it recommends that planning permission should therefore be refused in line with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 14.48 In their initial response, the applicant sought to provide the additional information requested by the Environment Agency in an Addendum to the Hydrogeological Impact Assessment comprising the following:
- A review of the impacts of the current operation to demonstrate the acceptability of the current operation and hence clarify the impacts of the current extension;
 - Monitoring flow and level within the River Frome SSSI channel adjacent to the site and evaluation of impacts now and in the future, particularly at low flows;

- Demonstration that the restoration design provides an effective, achievable long term water management strategy; and
 - Consideration of how any change to flow might negatively impact on the available habitat;
 - An assessment of the cumulative impacts of the Woodsford north eastern extension with the Hurst Farm and Station Road submitted application (Planning Application ref P/FUL/2023/03982).
- 14.49 In summary the Addendum concludes that the configuration of the historical, deep and well-developed ditch network on the application site has had a strong influence on the development proposals for the north eastern extension area at Woodsford. It states that mineral extraction will be undertaken in relatively small, discrete phases and that based upon a topographic survey undertaken since the submission of both the Woodsford north east extension and Hurst Farm Planning Applications, the relationship between water levels in the River Frome and the ditch network has been established.
- 14.50 Water levels it identifies within a broadly east-west, deep ditch, which broadly parallels the northern boundary of the Application Area are lower than those of the river. It states that it can be inferred that groundwater from both Application Areas is intercepted by the ditch, ultimately discharging to the river approximately 1.2 km downstream of the eastern boundary of Woodsford north eastern extension application Area. The feature it states effectively acts as a cut-off ditch, thereby precluding groundwater baseflow to the river from the application area. Consequently, there are not anticipated to be any changes to flow within the River Frome resulting from the Woodsford north eastern extension, or the two sites in combination.
- 14.51 Mineral extraction, with associated dewatering, the Addendum states has been undertaken successfully at the existing Woodsford Quarry for a prolonged period. An extensive database of groundwater level records exists from which the effects of mineral extraction and restoration have been assessed. The data, the Addendum further states demonstrates that drawdown effects are very similar to those predicted within the submitted Woodsford north eastern extension HIA and that, after the completion of restoration, groundwater level recovery will occur.
- 14.52 The method of ensuring that water discharged off-site is of acceptable quality is by the adoption of similar methods to those adopted successfully at the current site; i.e. by use of settlement lagoons and a flocculating dosing system.
- 14.53 In relation to the cumulative impacts the Addendum concludes that in absence of dewatering at Hurst Farm and the small and compartmentalised nature of the Woodsford north eastern extension extraction phases are such that the potential impacts of each proposal on the water environment will be small both during the mineral extraction and post-restoration phases.
- 14.54 As set out above, the Environment Agency in response to the submission of the Addendum remained concerned that there will still be variability in the groundwater level data which shows significant changes in the patterns of the level and range during the operation of the quarry works. They advised that further evaluation of the potential influence on river flows during operation is necessary and that they require a clearer understanding of the groundwater

observations for the current Woodsford Quarry operational abstraction and discharge regime associated with the current use and dewatering operation.

- 14.55 In response to these comments the applicant submitted a response document with details from a survey of the river, detailing the relationship between the elevations of the River Frome, historic ditches and base of mineral workings, and potential groundwater flows. This confirmed that the base on the mineral working closest to the river would be below the level of river (between 0.12 m and 3.13 m below the river water level in the closest phases), although the report states that the difference between the river and western phases, in Phases 7 and 8, would only be minimal.
- 14.56 Most significantly, and notwithstanding the above point, the response then sets out an amended proposal in relation to the proposed mitigation by use of the deep ditch to the north of the north eastern extension, with the proposed recharge of water to the existing deep ditch located between the northern limit of mineral extraction and the river. Specifically it proposed that in Phases 1a, 2 and 3 to discharge water from these phases, after settlement, to the western extremity of the existing deep ditch, with water being pumped from the settlement lagoons that are to be created in Phase 1a. Water would be conveyed in a pipeline, which would be installed immediately to the south of the screening bunds. The quality of water would be assured by settlement and the use of a flocculant plant. The same method of water management would be maintained throughout the operational life of the quarry.
- 14.57 The effect of this change is that discharged water will raise the ditch water level, which will act as a recharge trench. The flow direction within the ditch is eastwards, with the result that the mitigating effects will occur across the whole width of extraction areas 2 and 1a/3, with the raising of the ditch water level above that of the river would reversing groundwater flows locally, thereby preventing any flow from the river into the extraction area.
- 14.58 In Phases 7 and 8, the response document stated, because of the minimal height difference between the river and base of Phases 7 and 8, that these mitigation measures are not considered to be necessary.
- 14.59 In separate correspondence with the Environment Agency the applicant additionally proposed mitigation measures in relation to the impact on the Hurst Heath SNCI. This advised that the effects of dewatering within Phase 5, the closest to the SNCI feature, will be temporary and reversible, and that once mineral extraction and restoration have been completed active water management will cease and groundwater levels will recover. As a result the response stated that residual impacts on features within Hurst Wood are not anticipated. Nevertheless, it also proposed that a perforated pipe system could be used to convey dewatering water from Phase 5 to irrigate the area in the short term, until groundwater levels had recovered.
- 14.60 Despite this, the Agency has not changed its position and has maintained an objection due to the risk to the water environment, notably the River Frome SSSI, and the associated impacts on fisheries and biodiversity and also because of the risk to the adjacent Hurst Heath SNCI. It advises that the additional information and proposed mitigation outlined in the additional submissions from the applicant does not overcome the Agency's initially stated

objections and it recommends that planning permission should therefore be refused in line with paragraph 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 14.61 Overall, the advice from the Environment Agency is that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not adequately demonstrate that the proposal is acceptable in terms of its impacts on the water environment, notably the River Frome SSSI, and the associated impacts on fisheries and biodiversity and also the adjacent Hurst Heath SNCI. Consequently it has to be considered not to be compliant with the MSP, Policy MS-1 as it does not meet all the criteria set out in Part C and in particular Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. The proposal can similarly and for the same reasons be considered to be contrary to the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, Policy ENV9, the MS, Policy DM3 and the NPPF, paragraph 187.
- 14.62 It should be noted that the applicant has asked for more time to address the objection from the Environment Agency, but advised that this was likely to take in order of six months, with no certainty that an acceptable forward could be agreed with the Environment Agency. They were consequently advised to withdraw the application with a view to resubmitting it at a later date, but declined to do so and have advised that the likely timescale would mean that any submission from them is unlikely before early 2026.

Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land and Soil

- 14.63 The key issue relating to soils, as the site is almost entirely made up of agricultural land, is as set out above, that a substantial part of the application site, i.e. 79 percent, (approximately 77.6 ha), is made up of Grade 2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Consequently, the development of the site would have a significant effect on this, given that only a proportion of the disturbed land would subsequently be returned to agricultural use following restoration. The key issue then is whether that loss of BMV agricultural land is acceptable in terms of relevant development plan and national planning policy.
- 14.64 Relevant policy includes Policy DM1 of the MS which recognises the importance of appropriate management of soils and of steering development towards areas of poorer agricultural land quality. It states, in part, that minerals development must address satisfactorily the *“protection of soil resources throughout the life of the development and where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary and there is a choice of location, giving preference to the development of poorer quality land over higher quality or best and most versatile land.”* Policy RS1 similarly states, in part, that soil quality should be protected for use in restoration during *“stripping, storage, and management of soils, subsoils, and overburden arising as a result of site operations.”*
- 14.65 The NPPF similarly highlights the importance of BMV agricultural land, stating in paragraph 187 that the *“economic and other benefits of the best and most*

versatile agricultural land” should be recognised in planning decisions. In relation to the allocation of land for development in a development plan, the NPPF advises in footnote 65 that:

Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.”

- 14.66 The application site in this case is allocated in the MSP (2019), and in accordance with the footnote above, alternative sites were considered as part of the plan-making process. It is recognised in the development guidelines for the application site in the MSP (2019) that *“The site is BMV agricultural land and protection and appropriate management of soils is required to enable the land to retain its longer term capability..”*
- 14.67 The Agricultural Land Classification system divides agricultural land into five grades (Grade 1 ‘Excellent’ to Grade 5 ‘Very Poor’), with Grade 3 subdivided into Subgrade 3a ‘Good’ and Subgrade 3b ‘Moderate’. Grades 1 to 3a are considered to be ‘Best and Most Versatile’ (BMV). Approximately 40% of farmland in England is BMV, and approximately 20% of farmland in England (i.e. half of BMV land) is Grade 1 or 2. Within Dorset, approximately 4% of land is Grade 1 or 2.
- 14.68 Chapter 11 of the submitted Environmental Statement is concerned with Soil Resources and Agricultural Land Quality, and is supported by a Soils And Agricultural Quality of Land report and a Soil Management Plan.
- 14.69 The assessment identifies that 79% of the application site comprises Grade 2 BMV agricultural land, and that the development of the site would result in a net loss of 43.3 ha with 13.6 ha of land returned to BMV agricultural land. The loss would be permanent, as the majority of the land would be restored to water bodies, with only a relatively small proportion being returned to agricultural use following restoration.
- 14.70 The loss of 43.3 ha of BMV land would be large and significant. However, it is also the case that the MSP has endorsed the principle of the use of the land changing from agriculture to mineral extraction, with the Development Guidelines, indicating that the restoration of the site should explore the opportunity to provide a large scale wetland restoration scheme hydrologically connected to the River Frome.
- 14.71 This is what the restoration scheme seeks to achieve, and the assessment identifies that there is a need to retain the soil resource within this context. It identifies as mitigation that the soil resources on the site will be stripped and stored in stockpiles in accordance with the Soil Management Plan.
- 14.72 The Soil Management Plan is intended to ensure that the soil resources remain in a suitable condition to provide a functional planting medium to support the desired habitats in the restoration plan, and they intended to provide carbon storage in the fenland and lowland meadow habitats.
- 14.73 The assessment also identifies that the high groundwater levels within the site limit the area that is viable for restoration to agriculture without importation of inert wastes to do so. For this reason, the restoration to large scale wetland is considered the appropriate approach to the restoration of the site, as set out

in the Development Guidelines included in the MSP, and is intended to facilitate the creation of bio-diverse habitats in addition to some productive agricultural land. No significant cumulative effects are identified.

- 14.74 Whist Natural England have as set out above raised significant concerns about the impact of the development of the north eastern extension on water environment and the resulting impact on habitats, they do not object to the proposed working and restoration insofar as these relate to the retention and use of the soil resource on the site.
- 14.75 To ensure that soils resource is protected for use in restoration during stripping, and storage, it is recommended that the implementation of the Soil Management Plan be conditioned.
- 14.76 On this basis, whilst the loss of 43.3 ha of BMV land would be large and significant, the proposed restoration of the site is consistent with the Development Guidelines for the site out in the MSP, which recognises that for restoration to agriculture without importation of inert wastes, limits the scope of the restoration to agriculture on the one hand, and on the other promotes a large scale wetland restoration scheme that is hydrologically connected to the River Frome. This being the case the application is consistent with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policies DM1 and RS1 of the MS, and paragraph 187 of the NPPF.

Impacts on Heritage

- 14.77 In relation to the impact of heritage there are broadly two considerations; firstly, whether there are any impacts on, or on the setting of, any built heritage asset including Listed Buildings or Scheduled Monuments; and secondly whether there is any potential for buried archaeology on the site, and how this is addressed.
- 14.78 Relevant policy includes Policy DM7 of the MS which states that proposals for mineral development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated through an authoritative process of assessment and evaluation that heritage assets and their settings will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, and that adverse impacts should be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level.
- 14.79 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, Policy ENV4 states that any harm to the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset must be justified and that applications will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. It also states that where harm can be justified, appropriate provision will be required to capture and record features, followed by analysis and where appropriate making findings publicly available.
- 14.80 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss of or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 14.81 Paragraph 213 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification.

- 14.82 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 14.83 The Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP (2019), identify that there are designated and undesignated heritage assets on and around the site, including the Frome Bridge and its setting, other listed buildings and other historic features and below-ground archaeology. They identify that heritage and archaeology matters are important considerations, and that the significance of any affected heritage assets and their setting must be understood to ensure their significance is safeguarded. Archaeological assessment and evaluation, including a full Heritage and Setting Assessment, will be required as part of the development of the site.
- 14.84 The Council also has a statutory duty under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to 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”*.
- 14.85 The Environmental Statement included with the application includes a chapter, Chapter 7 which presents a Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and a further chapter, Chapter 8, which presents an Archaeological Impact Assessment. The latter is supported by a number of additional reports including a Historic Environment Assessment, a Geophysical Survey Report, and Desktop Geoarchaeological Assessment.
- 14.86 The Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment identifies that there are no designated heritage assets located within the application site, but that there are a number of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the wider area, including the Grade II listed Frome Bridge to the north of the site, the listed buildings, including the Grade I listed Woodsford Castle, located in Woodsford village to the west, and a WWII pill-box which is identified as a non-designated heritage asset, adjacent to the site.
- 14.87 The assessment of the impact of the proposal on the listed buildings concludes that the proposals will have no impact on the heritage value of the Grade I and II* listed buildings. It does identify negligible adverse effects to five listed buildings and one non-designated heritage assets by virtue of the change to the use of the land and the wider setting effects during the operational stage of the quarry extension. These effects are identified to grade II listed Woodsford Manor and its associated grade II listed outbuildings, as well as grade II listed Frome Bridge, grade II listed Clyffe House East and the non-designated WWII pill box. These impacts would however be temporary, lasting for the lifetime of the development, and would be reversible. For the post-restoration stage, the assessment identifies that there would be no effects on any of the designated heritage assets.
- 14.88 The assessment also considers the potential effect on the historic watermeadows within the site boundary. It identifies that the watermeadows were probably first developed in the late 17th century and comprise three main channels followed irregular and probably largely natural courses through the meadows. The watermeadows fell out of use in the mid 19th century, earlier

than watermeadows elsewhere. The main channels are now hedge and field boundaries, dividing an arable landscape. The assessment identifies that the minor channels have been ploughed out or have been entirely eradicated by the arable cultivation and that none of the sluices survive. As a result, it concludes that the remains of the watermeadows therefore have limited heritage value as historic landscape features, and are not designated. It nevertheless concludes that the proposed north-eastern extension would have a direct adverse effect on the watermeadow system, although the hedges and water channels will be retained and as result the assessment concludes that there would be a minor adverse effect, which is not significant in EIA terms, on cultural heritage as a result of the impact on the watermeadow system during the operational stage of the development. It also identifies minor adverse effect (which is not significant in EIA terms) on the watermeadow system at the post-restoration stage.

- 14.89 The Archaeological Impact Assessment identifies the application site as being located within an area of moderate-high archaeological potential, based upon evidence in the Dorset Historic Environment Record (HER and work within the current quarry and in the surrounding landscape. It identifies that the results of the evaluation have confirmed that potential, although there is a clear distinction between the western part of the application area, where multi-period archaeology is present, and the eastern part where only limited evidence for post-medieval archaeology is present.
- 14.90 The archaeology within the application area is considered to be of local-regional importance, but this is enhanced to regional importance as it forms part of an extensive landscape that has been archaeologically examined in the current quarry.
- 14.91 It identifies the need for the loss of archaeology to be offset by a programme of mitigation, comprising three areas that would be the focus of archaeological excavation on the western part of the application site, but none on the eastern part.
- 14.92 In relation to the potential for palaeolithic archaeology, it is proposed that prior to any gravel extraction taking place additional information on the nature, age and likely archaeological potential of the gravel bodies would be obtained, and that a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) would be submitted to Dorset Council prior to development commencing.
- 14.93 In terms of indirect impacts the assessment identifies that the nearest scheduled monuments – prehistoric barrows - are located over 1.6km north and north-east of the site and that there would be no effects on their setting.
- 14.94 The overall conclusion of the assessment is that with mitigation in place, the proposed development would have no significant adverse effects on archaeological assets, and those adverse effects that would occur would be more than offset by the proposed mitigation in the form of the archaeological investigation proposed.
- 14.95 Dorset Council Conservation have advised that, with some qualifications that they agree with the conclusions of the assessment in relation to the above ground heritage assets and that there are no significant impacts. They do raise

concern that if there is any increase in traffic, this could have an adverse on the structural integrity of both Frome Bridge and Hurst (South) Bridge, but detailed in the section above on Traffic and Highway Safety, there is no proposed increase in HGV movements associated with the development of the proposed north eastern extension.

- 14.96 They also make reference to the adequacy of the plant along the western boundary of Phase 8, which the boundary closes to Woodsford. As detailed above, Dorset Council – Landscape, whilst not expressing any explicit concerns about the planting along western boundary of Phase 8, have recommended that detailed landscape drawings and specifications for each phase should be reserved by condition with these being drawn up in consultation with the Mineral Planning Authority prior to the restoration of each phase of working. Each detailed restoration phase should be undertaken in accordance with the general restoration principles illustrated by the recently submitted revised Restoration Plan Drawing (Drawing No. W26_LAN_008 Rev A.), and then annual Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) reviews can be used to monitor their implementation.
- 14.97 Finally, they also note the acknowledgement in the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment of the significance of the water meadow systems on the site.
- 14.98 Turning to the consultation response from Historic England, they have, as set out above, offered lengthy and detailed comment on all three of the current applications, although its main concern is with the extension of the end date sought by the two accompanying s.73 applications for the existing quarry and silt lagoons. In relation to the north east extension application it states that it does not disagree with the applicant's opinion that the north eastern extension is too far from the castle to have any direct visual impact. However, it is nevertheless concerned that there would still be an impact on its setting and it is concerned that the surroundings of Woodsford Castle would change, from open rural fields to quarry operations, albeit for a limited period of time. It considers that the continued operations of the quarry will have a modest, adverse, impact on how Woodsford Castle is experienced and that as a result there would be minor harm to the setting of the Grade I listed building.
- 14.99 Historic England advises that paragraph 212 (previously paragraph 205) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that the more important the heritage asset, the greater the weight that should be given to its conservation and that Woodsford Castle is a heritage asset of the very highest significance.
- 14.100 Accordingly Historic England advises that the Council must give considerable weight to the conservation of Woodsford Castle when carrying out NPPF paragraph 215's 'balancing exercise' of weighing the harm against any wider public benefit associated with the proposal. It also advises that the Council must have regard to its statutory duty of section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.
- 14.101 As is set out above the Landmark Trust, which owns Woodford Castle has also submitted a strongly worded objection to all three applications on the ground

of the adverse impact on the setting of Woodsford castle as Grade I listed building.

- 14.102 In relation to archaeology, Dorset Council archaeology have advised that they agree with the conclusions of the Archaeological Impact Assessment, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission for approval a programme of archaeological works.
- 14.103 In terms of the overall impacts, whilst neither Dorset Council Conservation nor Historic England object to the north eastern extension application, Historic England do consider that across the three current applications as whole and with the retention of the processing plant and conveyor and silt lagoon, there will be a degree of harm to the significance of Woodsford Castle and that the degree of harm will be “less than substantial”. This is not an unreasonable conclusion, albeit the Committee should note that the response from the Landmark Trust which owns Woodsford Castle, which suggests that the level of harm should be considered to be substantial.
- 14.104 Less than substantial harm is not intended to mean that the harm is minor or inconsequential; it is the terminology used in the NPPF to categorise the level harm to the significance of heritage assets. It covers a wide spectrum of harm from very minor harm through to a level of harm stopping short of “substantial harm”, so has a wide meaning. If harm is identified, this requires that considerable importance and significant weight must be afforded in the balance, regardless of the degree of harm.
- 14.105 In considering the impact on the setting Woodsford Castle and other heritage assets the substantive issue, is not necessarily about the visual impact on the Castle and other heritage assets, as plant area at the quarry is located some way from the castle (approximately 800m south west of the castle). The impact instead arises from the harm caused to the setting of the Castle (and other heritage assets), which as the Landmark Trust comments, is about the industrial nature of the character of the quarry and the impact on the rural character of the approach to the listed building across fields.
- 14.106 In this context the advice from Historic England, is that the level of harm should appropriately be assessed as less than substantial. Although it attaches most weight to the impacts of the two extension of time applications, it also suggests that the north eastern extension will give rise to some harm, which it describes as “minor”. Even at this level the harm would amount to less than substantial harm, albeit at the end of scale of less than substantial harm.
- 14.107 This being the case the requirement of the NPPF, paragraph 215 and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, applies and corresponds with the duty in section 66(1), and this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 14.108 On the one hand, paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be) and paragraph 213 states that any harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification. On the other hand, paragraph

224 of the NPPF also states that when determining planning applications, great weight should also be given to the benefits of mineral extraction. It does then also go on to say *inter alia* that that in considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the historic environment.

- 14.109 When the different paragraphs of the NPPF are read together, it is clear in the circumstances that apply in this instance, that the issue is whether the less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle and the other nearby heritage assets, is outweighed by the public benefit of the proposal. In the context of the need for the supply of mineral identified in the MS, the application would not only develop one of the seven allocated sites to meet the identified shortfall in permitted reserves required during the Plan period to the end of 2028, but that this development alone represents almost one-third the total additional amount of mineral required to meet the shortfall in sand and gravel identified in the MSP (2014), i.e. just under 3 million tonnes of the identified shortfall of 9.36 Mt required over the plan period to 2028.
- 14.110 Furthermore, as set out above, this also has to be considered in the context of the current landbank, which cannot be considered to be significantly in excess of the required seven-year minimum. At a time when the anticipated need for aggregate and associated processing of soils and inert waste for planned major construction projects in the county is likely to increase significantly, this can be considered to amount to significant public benefit, with sufficient weight to outweigh the less than substantial harm to the setting of the affected heritage assets, i.e. Woodsford Castle and the other nearby heritage assets given the harm is at the lower end of the “scale”.
- 14.111 However, if the Committee is minded to refuse the application in accordance with the recommendation, because it has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment, then there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and consequently there is no basis upon which it can be recommended that the application can be approved, and accordingly there is consequential and additional reason for refusal, as set out in the recommendation.
- 14.112 On this basis the application can, when considered the proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of the application, because it has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM7 of the MS, and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use

- 14.113 The key issue in terms of the impacts on the landscape and landscape features arising from the proposed extension of the quarry is that the proposed phasing would involve the cessation of working within the existing quarry while the north eastern extension is worked, before working switches back to the existing quarry to enable the construction of the additional silt lagoon, and then temporary back to the north-eastern extension, before final restoration takes place in the existing quarry. As result the phased restoration of the existing quarry would be held over until after the working of the north-eastern extension is completed. This approach has had to be adopted because it is proposed that the processing of the mineral from the north eastern extension is to be undertaken within the existing plant area at the western end of the existing quarry, and because as set out above the further extension of the quarry will necessitate the development of an additional silt lagoon to manage the additional amount of mineral that will be extracted.
- 14.114 Relevant planning policy include Policy DM4 of the MS which states, in part, that development which affects the landscape will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts can be avoided; or, if avoidance is not possible, adequately mitigated; or, if avoidance or mitigation is not possible, compensatory enhancements secured to offset the impact.
- 14.115 Policy DM4 further requires that proposals include provisions to protect and/or enhance the quality, character, and amenity value of the countryside and landscape.
- 14.116 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV1 seeks to protect the plan area's exceptional landscapes and to ensure that development is located and designed so that it does not detract from and, where reasonable, enhances the local landscape character. It requires that appropriate measures will be required to moderate the adverse effects of development on the landscape and it states that development that significantly adversely affects the character or visual quality of the local landscape or will not be permitted.
- 14.117 Policy ENV3 additional seeks to ensure that development does not cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area's inclusion within the network and it states that development proposals that provide improved access and recreational use (where appropriate) will be supported.
- 14.118 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, while paragraph 224 states that when considering proposals for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural environment and should provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards.
- 14.119 The Restoration Vision contained in the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP (2019) identifies that the site as being located within the Valley Pasture Landscape Type of the Frome River Valley, which is described as a predominantly flat landform creating a multi-functional landscape where

nature conservation, flood water management and agriculture combine with recreation and amenity. For this reason it states that post mineral working, restoration must explore the opportunity to provide a large scale wetland restoration scheme hydrologically connected to the River Frome. This it states will significantly reduce phosphate, nitrogen and sediment load in the lower reaches of the River Frome SSSI and Poole Harbour SPA and Ramsar sites, and create habitat for the conservation of protected species such as otter and water vole as well as many species of wetland bird. The scheme of this scale should also contribute to flood alleviation and provide significant recreational opportunities in a largely agricultural landscape.

- 14.120 The Environmental Statement submitted with the application includes a chapter, Chapter 12, that sets the landscape and visual impact assessment of the proposed north eastern extension and the associated variations of condition applications relating to the existing quarry.
- 14.121 The Environmental Statement includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and two Addendums, a supporting Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) and a Restoration Proposals Plan for the north eastern extension area and Composite Restoration Plan which extends across the whole of the quarry including the extension area.
- 14.122 The LVIA includes 12 viewpoints as part of the visual analysis. The first Addendum to the LVIA includes an assessment of the cumulative landscape and visual effects with the adjacent Hurst Farm and Station Road, while the second Addendum provides additional information in response to the comments from the Dorset Council Landscape Officer (see above).
- 14.123 The assessment covers both the proposed north eastern extension and the extended duration of operation and delay in the completion of restoration of the existing consented operations.
- 14.124 The landscape effects have been assessed for the north eastern extension during operation, at completion of full restoration and at 15 years after completion of restoration for the Valley Pasture Landscape Type, the Heath and Farmland Mosaic Landscape Type, the topography of the site, the vegetation of the site, the remnants of the water meadows agricultural system of the North East Extension and the approved landscape restoration scheme of the Permitted Eastern and Western Reserves and the Additional Silt Lagoon area.
- 14.125 The effects are predicted to range from No change to Moderate/Minor adverse during the operational stage. No adverse effects are predicted at completion or completion +15 years, with all effects at completion +15 years being either neutral or beneficial (up to Moderate beneficial) as a result the assessment concludes that the restoration scheme which will add a characteristic matrix of agriculture, woodland, grassland and water bodies.
- 14.126 The assessment identifies that the landscape effects for the already consented eastern and western reserves, plant site and the additional silt lagoon were considered using the assessments undertaken in 2005 and 2018 for these developments, and it assess that the effects for the extended period of operation will be moderate/minor adverse.

- 14.127 The visual effects of the North East Extension are assessed by considering the 12 viewpoints from a range of distances, orientations and receptor types. Of these, the assessment identifies that three had no view of the site and that of the 9 that had visibility of the site, minor adverse visual effects were predicted for 4, 1 would be subject to negligible adverse effects and 4 would be subject to neutral effects during the operational phase. As with landscape effects, all adverse effects are predicted to cease at completion of restoration.
- 14.128 At completion + 15 years, the assessment predicts two minor beneficial effects, with the remainder being neutral or no change. The adverse effects predicted during the operational stage are restricted to locations directly adjacent to the site and at a single location on elevated land to the north of the site.
- 14.129 The visual effects for the consented eastern and western reserves and the additional silt lagoon were considered using the assessments undertaken in 2005 and 2018 for these developments, and it is predicted that the extended period of operation will lead to effects consistent with those previously identified for the operational stage.
- 14.130 Overall, the assessment concludes that no effects are predicted to be significant.
- 14.131 The Cumulative Impact Assessment including the second LVIA Addendum identifies in assessment of the impacts on landscape that the Hurst Farm and Station Road application judges the component parts of the assessment for the site character differently to the Woodsford application, recording a major adverse scale of effects, based on a judgement of effects on the site features only, whereas the assessment for Woodsford north east extension identifies a minor adverse effects based on a judgement of effects on the character of the wider landscape.
- 14.132 It comments that the significant adverse effects recorded on the Hurst Farm and Station Road site features are an unavoidable fact of mineral development on any site. This, the assessment states reflects the inevitable scale of change to the immediate landform and landcover during progressive working and restoration operations. It further comments that the east side of the Woodsford Farm North East extension abuts the west side of the Hurst Farm site, but they are divided by a woodland belt either side of a ditch and are not intervisible or considered together within the wider setting. It does however acknowledge that the cumulative effect of working both sites concurrently is likely to reinforce this significant adverse effect.
- 14.133 It then goes on to identify that both assessments judge the effects on the wider landscape character as minor adverse during the operational period and both recognise beneficial effects post restoration.
- 14.134 The assessments overall conclusion is therefore that significant cumulative adverse effects would occur on the landform and landcover of the valley floor if both sites are worked concurrently, but that this would not be perceived from the wider landscape. However, cumulative effects on the landscape character of the setting would not be significant adverse.
- 14.135 In terms of visual impacts the assessment concludes that cumulative visual effects could arise from the combination of proposed development of the

Woodsford north eastern extension and Hurst Farm on various receptors located on rising ground around Tincleton, Clyffe House and Pallington Heath to the north and residents on the upper floors of Woodsford Lower Dairy. However, it also concludes that the cumulative magnitude of change during working operations from these long distance and mostly filtered viewpoints is such that the level of effect is not likely to exceed low/medium.

- 14.136 The sensitivity of the visual receptors potentially common to both developments is identified as ranging from low to high. None of the visual receptors potentially common to both developments are judged to receive greater than minor/moderate adverse effects over any timescale. The cumulative, combined or in-sequence effects for any receptors are assessed as not reaching a level of significant (major or major/moderate adverse).
- 14.137 In relation to the cumulative long-term effects of the restoration schemes on the wider landscape, the assessment identifies that the adverse effects on the landscape during the operational period of both quarries diminish to a range of slight adverse to minor beneficial on completion of the restoration proposals.
- 14.138 The assessment additionally identifies that the baseline landscape setting of both sites, contains at least four other active or restored sand and gravel workings (Woodsford, Moreton, Pallington and Warmwell Airfield) and that leisure and recreational land uses resulting from former sand and gravel workings are inherent to the changing baseline environment. It concludes that the range of long-term effects on landscape receptors common to both developments is between neutral and major beneficial. The cumulative effects of these are beneficial, particularly in relation to biodiversity by providing a variety of lowland wetland habitats and increase green infrastructure provision.
- 14.139 The Dorset Council Landscape Officer has returned lengthy and detailed comments, which are set out in full above. They advise that the overall layout of the proposed extension area in terms of the division of distinct parcels of land to be worked and the resulting series of water bodies at restoration stage, has been designed in a sympathetic and appropriate manner. The principles shown in the proposed overall site layout respect and retain the historic field boundary pattern. They advise that the retention of these boundaries will help to visually 'break up' the expanses of new water bodies created both from the views along the valley floor and from more elevated, distant views over the site.
- 14.140 Whilst they state that they have outstanding concerns about some of the details of the proposed scheme, they are content for these to be addressed by condition.
- 14.141 In particular they have commented that more boundary planting is required in certain areas to help break up, soften and screen views of the larger new waterbodies; and they are also advised that further details of the conveyor crossing and the final restoration culvert are required and in particular they note that the previously installed culvert on the crossing between the western reserve and the existing eastern extension includes temporary concrete barriers, replacement hedge planted too close to the road, exposed concrete culvert edges, small sections of very tight radius full face kerbing etc, which has not has not been well executed.

Phasing

- 14.142 A particular point to note on phasing is that it is proposed that working within the existing consented quarry would be suspended whilst the north eastern extension is worked and as a result working and restoration of the existing quarry would not be completed before working the extension area is commenced. This on the face of it does not seem an ideal approach, and not consistent with the principle of phased working and restoration at the earliest opportunity, as set out in paragraph 224 of the NPPF. The reason for it is that it is proposed to retain the existing plant area where the extracted mineral from the extension would be processed. This is a point that has been recognised in the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP, which states that mineral from the extension should continue to be processed at the existing plant site. This does offer the benefit of minimising disturbance from processing in the extension area and allowing its relatively prompt restoration, but it enables the management of the volume and routeing of HGV traffic from site, without any resulting increase.
- 14.143 As such, while the phasing may appear not be ideal, it is consistent with the Development Guidelines for the site in terms of the reasons why it has been proposed.

Restoration Proposals

- 14.144 In relation to the restoration proposals, it is clear that these do seek to provide a large-scale wetland restoration scheme that is hydrologically connected to the River Frome, with the overall aims being to retain the landscape features associated with the former watermeadow network. Whilst the Environment Agency, as set out above, has raised an objection to the way the site is to be worked, due to the risk of adverse impacts on the hydrogeology of the site and the River Frome, the restoration scheme in itself is consistent with the Restoration Vision set out Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP.
- 14.145 In relation to the restoration scheme plan, The Landscape Officer, whilst in principle content with the proposals has commented that this is at this stage at a concept level and that further full details will be required of the proposed restoration, planting and maintenance. They advise that the second Addendum LVIA identifies that the LEMP is intended to be a live document that will be revised at each annual restoration review meeting as the development progresses and that individual detailed landscape drawings and specifications will be prepared for agreement with the MPA and other stakeholders prior to the restoration of each phase of working. This would need to be secured by condition.
- 14.146 They are also content with the conclusions of the cumulative impact assessment.

Aftercare

- 14.147 In relation to aftercare, paragraph 224 of the NPPF states that proposals for minerals development must provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Similarly, Policy RS1 of the MS sets out

the requirement that any aftercare scheme should incorporate an aftercare period of at least five years or where appropriate, voluntary longer periods for certain uses will be sought through agreement.

- 14.148 The application in this case notes that historically mineral restoration or reclamation schemes and outline aftercare schemes were submitted as separate and disconnected schemes. This application, in this instance, includes an outline Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), which addresses the principles of restoration of each of the types of area to be created and provides an outline level of information on how they will be managed post restoration.
- 14.149 It proposes that prior to the restoration of each phase being commenced a phase specific LEMP will be produced that relates to the specific details of that phase and adapts to the specific conditions relevant at the time. This it states is particularly pertinent in this instance where there are a number of different types of restoration ranging from agricultural land to wildlife lakes. In effect a LEMP will wrap up the same information as a restoration scheme and an aftercare scheme, but, because of the scale and nature of the extension, the fine detail will be confirmed during the life of the quarry extension.
- 14.150 As set out above the Landscape Officer has advised that they are content to accept such an approach subject to the imposition of a condition to secure the submission of a phased LEMP.

Afteruse

- 14.151 One additional matter that Committee's attention is drawn to is that whilst the application includes a concept Restoration Plan, which as set out above, the Landscape Officer advises is acceptable, the application says relatively little about the afteruse of the site. It states that the Restoration Plan (as shown on Drawing No W26_LAN_008) will see the restoration of Phases 1 and 2 to lowland fen/pasture, containing seasonally flooded shallow scrapes to enhance the range of wildlife habitats and increase biodiversity and that groundwater monitoring information from the extension site and the knowledge gained from working the existing quarry has informed the design of the restoration. Phases 3 to 6 it states will be restored to open lakes, some for angling and others for wildlife with substantial reed/fen margins, and Phases 7 to 9 will be restored partly to agriculture, at a slightly lower level than existing and partly to wildlife lakes.
- 14.152 Although the intention is, as set out above that there will be an annually reviewed LEMP, based on the submitted Outline LEMP, its purpose, as it states is to provide an appropriate level of information on the intended restoration of the land, habitat creation, habitat establishment and aftercare of the restored land and habitats within the site. This is intended to provide the framework for appropriate management of the land to ensure a fully functioning landscape that protects and enhances landscape features and biodiversity within the site.
- 14.153 Whilst some of the land is to be returned to agricultural use and much of it will developed as wetland, details of how it would actually provide "significant recreational opportunities" and how these would be accessed and managed,

in accordance with the LEMP are not provided. Whilst this is not enough in itself to justify refusal of the application, it is certainly an aspect of the proposals that is somewhat lacking beyond the details set out above.

- 14.154 Notwithstanding this shortcoming, the proposal can in overall terms be considered to be in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy ENV1 and ENV3 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, Policy DM4 of the MS, and paragraphs 187 and 224 of the NPPF.

Traffic and Highway Safety

- 14.155 The key issues in relation to traffic and highway safety relate to whether the development of the proposed extension would give rise to any significant increases in traffic and any consequential highway safety impacts including any capacity related considerations.
- 14.156 Relevant planning policy includes Policy DM8 of the MS which states that “Minerals development which could have an adverse impact as a consequence of the traffic generated by it will only be permitted where it is demonstrated, through a Transport Assessment, that a safe access to the proposed site will be provided, that there will be no adverse impact on the Strategic, Primary and/or Local road network, that developers will provide funding for any highway, that any transport network improvements necessary to mitigate or compensate for any adverse impacts are undertaken, and that proposals should as far as possible have direct access or suitable links with the Dorset strategic highway network or primary route network.
- 14.157 Policy DM8 also states that sustainable transportation should be used where possible and practical, including through minimising distance travelled by road and maximising the use of transport means such as rail, water, pipelines, or conveyor belts to transport minerals where practicable and environmentally acceptable.
- 14.158 West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, Policy COM7 seeks to ensure that development is located where the volume of traffic likely to be generated can be accommodated on the local highway network without exacerbating community severance and states that development will not be permitted where the residual cumulative impacts on the efficiency of the transport network are likely to be severe.
- 14.159 Paragraph 116 of the NPPF advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 14.160 Paragraph 115 of the NPPF advises, that it should be ensured that... a safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users and paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.
- 14.161 The Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP state that mineral from the extension should continue to be processed at the existing plant site, with no intensification of production or simultaneous working of the current site

and extension and that mineral should be transported from the point of extraction to the processing site via internal routes within the quarry. They further state that no external roads are to be used for transport to the processing site and that access to the site will be via the existing access.

- 14.162 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment as a separate document from the Environmental Statement. The assessment considers the suitability of the site access and adjacent highway network to accommodate the level of traffic expected to be generated by the allocated extension to the mineral workings, beyond those considered when consent was originally granted.
- 14.163 This identifies that, other than occasional localised access for plant during the development of the individual phases, all vehicular access will be via the existing quarry access on to the D13 between West Stafford and Crossways, with mineral from the North Eastern Extension to be transported to the existing quarry plant area for processing by an extension to the existing conveyor.
- 14.164 The assessment further identifies that the D13 to the east of the existing site access provides local access to Crossways and to the B3390 and that it is generally of a good standard although immediately to the east it crosses the Dorchester to Wareham railway line at a level crossing at an angle and as a result horizontal alignment over the crossing is poor. The route to the B3390 passes directly through Crossways.
- 14.165 To the west the D13 provides access to the A35 and A352 to the east of Dorchester. Whilst this route is predominately rural, it provides access to other previous mineral extraction sites in the area to the south of the D13. As a result of these quarries the assessment identifies that the route has been upgraded in the past and widened to accommodate HGV traffic. The road is generally around 6.5m – 7m and is subject to the national speed limit.
- 14.166 The assessment identifies, that the existing consent for the quarry has no limitations on the tonnage of mineral or product that can be exported or on HGV movements. It nevertheless identifies existing quarry traffic comprising an average of 25 two-way movements in the AM Peak and 17 movements in the PM Peak, with a daily average of 57 HGV movement in and out of the site, resulting in a daily average of 114 HGV movements. The peak loads per day were 75 loads resulting in a total of 150 peak daily trips which includes trips related to the existing bagging plant on the site.
- 14.167 If the north eastern extension is approved it identifies that extraction will continue at the established rate of 250,000 tonnes per year of material extracted, and that with the assumption of 275 working days (5-day week plus half day Saturday) and 20 tonne loads, the forecast assumes a required average of 45 loads per day resulting in a total of 90 average daily trips. This is an average and peaks will be higher. Nevertheless, on this basis it concludes that there would no increase in traffic generated by the site and that there would be no material impact on the local road network
- 14.168 The assessment identifies, from a review of the personal injury collision data for the last five-year period, that there are no significant highways safety issues that need to be addressed.

- 14.169 The assessment also considers the cumulative impacts of the development in conjunction with the proposal for the development of the adjacent Hurst Farm and Station Road site. It identifies that the assessment for that site indicates that the expected traffic generation will be no more than 100 loads (200 two-way HGV movements) per operational day, and that around 10 movements per day are expected to use the route past the Woodsford Quarry. It concludes that at this level of traffic, there would be no material impact on the conclusions of the assessment set out above.
- 14.170 The overall conclusions of the assessment are that with the extension output from the quarry will continue at the existing rate resulting in no material increase in traffic flows on the adjacent highway network and that the proposed development will have no material impact on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network and that the existing highway infrastructure is adequate the forecast traffic flows.
- 14.171 As set out above the Highway Authority has advised that it has no objection to the proposal subject to conditions requiring the continuation of road sweeping and the checking on a regular basis for any type of damage in and around the entrance to the site, and for any defects to be repaired caused by vehicle movements coming to and from the site.
- 14.172 The concerns expressed by Network Rail about damage caused to the level crossing decking, at the Woodsford (No.38) level crossing, can if the application is approved be addressed by condition, to ensure that HGVs leaving the quarry are free from any sand that could be dropped on the public highway, including the level crossing.
- 14.173 On this basis it can be considered that the proposal complies with MSP Policy DM8 and West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy COM7 and is in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF. It can also be considered to be compliant with the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP.

Amenity (Noise, Vibration, Air Quality, Dust, and Lighting)

- 14.174 The key issues in relation to amenity concern noise, dust and light, particularly in relation to the nearest residential properties, but also more widely in relation to the surrounding area because of the potential impact of off-site HGV movements.
- 14.175 Relevant planning policy includes Policy DM2 of the MS which seeks to ensure that proposals demonstrate that any potential adverse impacts associated with dust, emissions to air, lighting, and vibration, are avoided or adequately mitigated. In addition, Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan seeks to ensure that proposals for new development are designed to minimize their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of nearby existing and future residents as a result of noise, pollution, vibration odours or other detrimental emissions including light pollution from artificial light.
- 14.176 In addition, paragraphs 198, 201 and 224 of the NPPF, seek to ensure that new development, including mineral development, does not give rise to any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any vibration impacts on nearby sensitive properties.

14.177 The Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP, refer to the need to identify potential impacts on residential amenity, which they state need to be assessed and mitigation identified where appropriate.

14.178 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for Minerals provides detailed guidance for how to assess minerals application in regard to impacts on amenity and nearby properties, including appropriate noise levels.

Noise

14.179 The PPG on Minerals advises that planning authorities should aim to establish a noise limit, through a planning condition, at the noise-sensitive property that does not exceed the background noise level (LA90,1h) by more than 10dB(A) during normal working hours (0700-1900). However, it further states that where it will be difficult not to exceed the background level by more than 10dB(A) without imposing unreasonable burdens on the mineral operator, the limit set should be as near that level as practicable. In any event, the total noise from the operations should not exceed 55dB(A) LAeq, 1h (free field).

14.180 The PPG sets different noise limits for temporary operations (defined as up to 8 weeks), such as soil-stripping, and the construction and removal of bunds. It allows for increased temporary daytime noise limits of up to 70dB(A) LAeq 1h (free field) for periods of up to 8 weeks in a year at specified noise-sensitive properties.

14.181 The Environmental Statement submitted with the application includes a chapter that addresses the potential noise and vibration effects of the proposed north-east extension including site preparation, operation, and restoration phases.

14.182 Noise levels are predicted for soil stripping and bund formation works, and also for a number of operational scenarios during extraction and restoration, and identifies the potential for noise impacts on the two properties in the centre of the extension site at Cuckoo Mead and Lower Dairy, and the need for noise mitigation in the form of acoustic bunds around the properties that would be constructed to a height of at least 3m.

14.183 With this built in mitigation the assessment identifies that the predicted noise levels from soil stripping and bund formation will fall below the maximum recommended noise level of 70 dB LAeq,1h for such activities, resulting in a negligible significance of effect, whilst the extraction and restoration, noise levels are predicted to fall below the maximum recommended noise level of 55 dB LAeq,1h for such activities, also resulting in a negligible significance of effect, with a noise management plan to be put in place and mitigation also provided by bunds on the boundaries.

14.184 An addendum to the noise and vibration assessment has additionally been submitted as part of the Regulation 25 Further Information, to provide consideration of the cumulative impacts of the development of the site together with the development of the adjacent proposed development at Hurst Farm and Station Road. This identifies the need for additional noise mitigation at Cuckoo Mead/Lower Dairy, i.e. the properties in the centre of the site. To achieve an acceptable noise level the height of the proposed bunds to the east of the two properties needs to be increased to 4m from 3m). With this amendment

the combined impact of the proposed extension to Woodsford Quarry and the proposed quarry at Hurst Farm and Station Road would result in a potential noise impact no greater than 10dB above the background

- 14.185 As set out above the Environmental Health team have not offered any objection to the development on noise grounds subject to the inclusion of conditions setting out the permitted noise limits, the implementation of the noise management plan and the undertaking of the noise monitoring in the event of a valid complaint about noise.

Dust and Air Quality

- 14.186 The potential to cause dust is generally a concern with proposals for sand and gravel extraction.
- 14.187 The PPG on Minerals advises that where dust emissions are likely to arise, mineral operators are expected to prepare a dust assessment study, which should be undertaken by a competent person/organisation with acknowledged experience of undertaking this type of work, and set out details of a key stages for undertaking a dust study. In relation to air quality the key concerns in relation to minerals sites, as set out in the PPG on air quality relate to emissions from processing but also emissions from vehicles and plant including particulates and greenhouse gases.
- 14.188 The Environmental Statement includes a chapter that addresses the impacts on air quality and is supported by a Draft Dust Management and Mitigation Scheme. The assessment considers the potential impacts and their effect on air quality resulting from the operations associated with the north eastern extension and specifically any potential significant air quality and dust effects that the extraction, restoration and associated activities would have on the baseline environment together with a review of the air quality and dust mitigation measures required to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effect.
- 14.189 The assessment considers the amenity and health of local receptors due to changes in the level and location of dust generation. Impacts (and effects) at both human and ecological receptors are considered, including the closest residential receptors to the proposed quarry including Lower Dairy Farmhouse and Cuckoo Mead and the 'Sculpture by the Lakes'.
- 14.190 The assessment relates to 'suspended particulate matter' with diameters below 10µm (PM10 and PM2.5), and 'deposited dust' which is responsible for disamenity impacts (which may lead to complaints) generally with diameters between 10µm and 75µm.
- 14.191 The potential for emissions resulting from any increase in vehicle movements on the local road network to have a significant effect on air quality is also considered in the assessment. The potential for in-combination air quality and dust effects has also been considered.
- 14.192 The assessment concludes that there is a low likelihood of an exceedance of the PM10 and PM2.5 air quality limits given the low background concentrations and the coarse and damp nature of the sand and gravel being worked. This also means that the risk of silicosis is negligible both for site workers and also

receptors in the area. It also concludes that the dust assessment indicates that the likely effects would be 'not significant' at all receptor locations.

- 14.193 It advises that the applicant, Woodsford Farms, has proposed that a condition be applied and enforced which does not allow Phase 9a to be worked whilst the closest properties at Woodsford Lower Dairy are occupied by residents potentially sensitive to dust and amenity impacts.
- 14.194 It concludes that the assessment of vehicular emissions has not identified any adverse impacts associated with the proposed development on the basis that there would not be additional heavy vehicle movements above the relevant screening threshold when compared with the existing quarry traffic.
- 14.195 Finally, it advises that the implementation of good standard practice mitigation measures would be continued into the new quarry extension and overall, taking into account the proposed dust control measures, that the likelihood of any adverse effects on surrounding receptors is considered to be 'Not Significant'.
- 14.196 An addendum to the air quality assessment has additionally been submitted as part of the Regulation 25 Further Information, to update to the air quality assessment in order to fully consider the potential in-combination effects with the Hurst Farm and Station Road development, including the in-combination assessment of dust impacts and resulting effects on human health, disamenity and ecological receptors; and further in-combination assessment of off-site traffic emissions. It concludes that the findings remain unchanged from those in the Environmental Statement chapter and that they are also consistent with the air quality and dust assessments for the Hurst Farm and Station Road planning application.
- 14.197 The Environmental Health team have not offered any objection to the development on air quality grounds.

Lighting

- 14.198 The main concerns in relation to lighting relate to the amenity impacts and also to the impacts on protected species, and especially bats.
- 14.199 In addition to Policy DM2 of the MS, Policy ENV16 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan seeks to minimize potential pollution from glare or spillage of light.
- 14.200 Paragraph 198 of the NPPF similarly states that planning decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
- 14.201 In this instance, the application states that no lighting assessment has been submitted for the north-eastern extension area as there will be no fixed lighting, and only occasional mobile lighting for safety when operating.
- 14.202 The applications do not make reference to the continuing impact of the extension of the end dates of the two permissions for the existing Woodsford

Quarry, being sought through Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 and P/VOC/2023/04761.

Conclusions in Relation to Amenity Impacts

- 14.203 For the reasons set out above there are no reasons to consider that the proposed north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry or either of the two s.73 applications would be unacceptable. There is therefore no reason to consider that the proposal is not compliant with MSP Policy DM2 and the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP, West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV16, or paragraphs 198 and 201 and 224 of the NPPF.

Impacts on Protected Species, Habitats and Biodiversity including Trees

- 14.204 The impacts on protected species, habitats and biodiversity, is a significant issue with Natural England raising concerns related to those expressed by the Environment Agency about the potential impact of the development impact on the water environment and in particular the potential impact on the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). As a result, the application raises significant issues in relation to the impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI, as detailed above.
- 14.205 Relevant planning policy includes Policy DM5 of the MS which seeks to ensure that proposals for minerals development must be accompanied by an objective assessment of the potential effects of the development on features of biodiversity and taking into account cumulative impacts with other development and the potential impacts of climate change. In addition they must have particular regard to the need to protect, maintain and/or enhance sites and species of international and national importance, in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements and consider the potential for existing habitats on the site to be restored to higher quality habitats, during and after mineral working.
- 14.206 Policy MS-1 of the MSP and the Development Guidelines for the site require full assessment of all ecological impacts to be undertaken, particularly in relation to those on the River Frome SSSI which is in close proximity, with appropriate mitigation identified and implemented.
- 14.207 Policy ENV2 of West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan seeks to ensure that new development does not adversely impact on protected species and supports proposals that conserve or enhance biodiversity and states that the development of major sites should take opportunities to help connect and improve the wider ecological networks. It also states that; internationally designated wildlife sites will be safeguarded from development that could adversely affect them, unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution; that development that is likely to have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the Poole Harbour and Dorset Heaths International designations will only be permitted where there is provision to avoid, or secure effective mitigation; that development that is likely to have an adverse effect upon

nationally designated wildlife sites will not be permitted unless the benefits, in terms of other objectives, clearly outweigh the impacts on the special features of the site and broader nature conservation interests and there is no alternative acceptable solution; that in other locations, including locally identified wildlife sites and water-bodies, where significant harm to nature conservation interests cannot be avoided, it should be mitigated and that where it cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated, compensation will result in the maintenance or enhancement of biodiversity; that features of nature conservation interest should be safeguarded by development; and that proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodlands and veteran trees, will be refused unless the need for and public benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss.

- 14.208 Policy ENV3 also seeks to ensure that development does not cause harm to the green infrastructure network or undermine the reasons for an area's inclusion within the network and it states that development proposals that promote geodiversity and biodiversity within this network of spaces will be supported.
- 14.209 In addition, Policy MS-1 of the MSP makes clear that any proposals for the development of the allocated sites in the plan must demonstrate that possible effects (including those related to hydrology, displacement of recreation, species, proximity, land management and restoration) that might arise would not adversely affect the integrity of European and Ramsar sites either alone or in combination with other plans or projects and if necessary implementation of mitigation measures as identified through Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening.
- 14.210 In addition, paragraphs 187 and 193 of the NPPF, seek to ensure that new development, including mineral development contributes to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting sites of biodiversity and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.
- 14.211 They additionally state that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused.
- 14.212 An Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been submitted as part of the Environmental Statement. This identifies that there are a number of species that are present or likely to be present on and around the application site and includes an assessment of the impacts on protected/notable sites, habitats and species, and predicted impacts are addressed through proposals for mitigation/compensation as well as enhancement.
- 14.213 It also includes information to support a Habitats Regulations Assessment of relevant European sites, required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

- 14.214 The species surveys undertaken between 2021 and 2023 included surveys of botany, hedgerows, bats, great crested newts, dormice and breeding and overwintering birds. It identifies that there are other species/communities that are either not present within the study area and/or are not impacted by the proposals.
- 14.215 The assessment concludes that the north eastern extension would have no likely significant effect on European designated sites and is intended to allow the Local Planning Authority to undertake a 'Test of Likely Significance' as part of an Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017.
- 14.216 The assessment further concludes that appropriate mitigation has been established to protect the River Frome SSSI, the nearby SNCI, other notable habitats (most species-rich hedgerow and ditch corridors), protected/notable wildlife (otter, dormice, badger, brown hare, hedgehog and nesting birds). The mitigation it states, addresses and nullifies any potential significant adverse effects.
- 14.217 It identifies that within the application area there are no significant semi-natural habitats (just 4.39ha modified grassland field headlands and 0.051ha other neutral grassland around Pond 1) and that there is c. 9.1km of hedgerow and trees, of which 7.5km is species-rich.
- 14.218 It states that the restoration scheme will provide a total of ca. 54.93ha of high quality semi-natural habitats (species-rich grassland, fen, hedgerow, woodland scrub, wildlife and angling lakes) with 1.16km of species-rich hedgerow being provided through new planting.
- 14.219 These habitats and associated wildlife, the assessment states, will be managed and monitored in the long-term. It states that the quarry restoration will provide significant biodiversity gain, which adequately covers the requirements of the Environment Act 2021, which came into effect in early 2024.
- 14.220 The assessment concludes that the proposed development and restoration will not alter the functioning of the retained habitats on-site and will significantly increase the overall habitat and structural diversity found within the application site, which will contribute to UK and local biodiversity targets, and will benefit a range of wildlife.
- 14.221 The assessment concludes that the residual ecological effect of the north eastern extension is considered to be positive in a District–County context in the medium to long-term as habitats develop and mature and that it will not contribute to or compound, and may provide an opportunity to off-set, any existing or future adverse ecological impacts that may be manifest within the local landscape.

- 14.222 An addendum to the EclA was submitted in response to the Regulation 25 request for Further Information. This presented the results of bat and dormouse surveys that were undertaken to update the ecological baseline and it provides a revised cumulative impact assessment to take account of the in combination effects of working in proximity to extraction at the adjacent Hurst Farm site. In relation the latter, it concludes that the only working areas on the quarry boundaries that would potentially coincide are Phase 1a at Woodsford Quarry Extension and Phase 1b at Hurst Farm Quarry, which combined have an approximate working area of 3.5ha. It identifies that the mineral processing plant and stockyard to be implemented at Stage 1 of Hurst Farm Quarry is also adjacent to the boundary with Woodsford Quarry Extension and covers an approximate area of 7.2ha. As such, the assessment identifies that there will be an in-combination effect when the working area in Phase 4 of the Woodsford Quarry north eastern extension (which is approximately 6.6 ha) is operational because it is on the boundary with Hurst Farm Quarry. It also identifies that the proposed Hurst Farm Quarry's mineral processing plant and stockyard would be a permanent feature during the entire operational period of the quarry.
- 14.223 Despite this it concludes that the proposed Hurst Farm Quarry would not however, remove any important connecting habitat to the Woodsford north eastern extension that would support or facilitate the movement of notable wildlife into, or out of the application site.
- 14.224 The assessment identifies that both proposals have a phasing plan that staggers the habitat loss from the farmland and retains key habitats and linkages. It states that they would minimise agricultural habitat loss within their site at any one time and control abiotic factors, including hydrogeology and hydrology effects on the River Frome, dust management, sensitive lighting and noise/ vibration management to protect retained habitats from being impacted or damaged.
- 14.225 The assessment concludes that concurrent operation and restoration of the two quarries could maintain and enhance biodiversity and that concurrent operation of the two quarries would not contribute to or compound any existing or future adverse ecological impacts that may occur in the local landscape.
- 14.226 Natural England in their response to the consultation on the three applications, which was returned following receipt of the consultation responses from the Environment Agency, has advised that they share the concerns expressed by Environment Agency about the potential effects on the River Frome SSSI. They state that the River Frome SSSI is of national importance and as a chalk stream it is part of a wider international resource of which England hosts a significant proportion worldwide.
- 14.227 As set out above they have also expressed concern about potential adverse effects of de-watering proposed as part of the development of the north eastern extension both from Woodsford north-eastern extension application on the SNCI, which is adjacent to the eastern boundary of the application site, and in

particular its population of nationally rare heath lobelia (*Lobelia urens*), an issue also raised by the Environment Agency.

- 14.228 Natural England notes that whilst the Hurst Farm application includes plans to manage Hurst Heath for heath lobelia and secure the expansion of its population as well as to benefit other ecological interests the evidence from the Woodsford north eastern extension application provides little certainty that the groundwater levels fundamental to the species survival will not be compromised at the existing population (c.120m away from the application boundary) but also at the locations where expansion is planned. Thus it would not only affect the existing small heath lobelia site but also other sites over a wider area.
- 14.229 As set out above the Natural Environment Team have also drawn attention to the comments from the Environment Agency and Natural England in relation to the impacts on the River Frome SSSI and Hurst Heath SNCI, and identify that heath lobelia occurs at only seven sites confined to southern England, and the importance ensuring that the impact on it of the Woodsford north eastern extension are properly assessed and that appropriate mitigation is identified and implemented.
- 14.230 They have also commented on the impacts on protected species including Hazel Dormice as set out above and the details for inclusion of the finalised Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP), and as set out above have expressed concern that the inclusion of fishing lakes as part of the restoration plan that also includes wildlife waterbodies is not complementary and presents a biosecurity risk to the ecological integrity of the proposed wildlife lakes.
- 14.231 The substantive issue, as such clearly remains, as the Environment Agency and Natural England have set out in their consultation responses that the north eastern extension application has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and in turn that it would not have an unacceptable impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI. The Environment Agency has made clear, despite the additional submissions by the applicant, that this issue has not been adequately assessed or addressed and as such they have maintained their objection to the application. Natural England and the Council's Natural Environment Team have made clear that they share the Environment Agency's concerns.
- 14.232 As such the proposal has to be considered to be contrary to Policies SS1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development), DM1 (Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development), Policy DM3 (Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources) and DM5 (Biodiversity and Geological Interest) of the MS) and Policy ENV2 and Policy ENV3 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. It also contrary to the MSP, Policy

MS-1 and specifically Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) paragraphs 187 and 193.

- 14.233 It should additionally be noted, as is set out in Section 13 above, that because the proposals have not yet been demonstrated to be acceptable in relation to the impacts on the water environment and protected species, habitats and biodiversity, it is not yet possible to complete the Appropriate Assessment of the proposals and conclude that the development would not have a likely significant effect on a European site in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 14.234 Paragraph 222 of the NPPF states that since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. The proposal is located in an area of Dorset that has reserves of river terrace gravel and Poole formation sand, which are important minerals for the building industry. As house building is predicted to increase, looking ahead, the supply of suitable mineral becomes more and more important. The site is also an allocated site in the MSP.
- 14.235 The principle of sand and gravel extraction is therefore considered acceptable in this location. Paragraph 224 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the predicted expansion of house building looking ahead. The NPPF also states that mineral planning authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside protected areas (e.g. National Landscapes), which this proposal complies with.
- 14.236 The NPPF also requires that proposals need to ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment and human health, as well as taking into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality.
- 14.237 Although the proposed north eastern extension to the existing Woodsford Quarry is proposed on the allocated Site AG4, in the MSP, any proposal still has to be acceptable in terms of its environmental impacts, and if this is not the case then an application can still be refused.
- 14.238 The north eastern extension site in this case, is a sensitive one insofar as it is located immediately adjacent to the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and also in close proximity to the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). The existing Woodsford Quarry site also lies within the setting of the Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 listed building.
- 14.239 As result Policy MS-1 and the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in the MSP identify a number of key criteria that must be addressed for

proposals to be considered to be acceptable. These include the undertaken of a hydrological/hydrogeological assessment including assessment of potential impacts on fisheries in the River Frome, and any mitigation required, and full assessment of all ecological impacts on the River Frome SSSI with appropriate mitigation identified.

14.240 In this instance the Environment Agency has raised a significant objection to Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 which is the substantive application for the proposed north eastern extension to Woodsford Quarry on the basis that the application has failed to demonstrate that it would not have an adverse impact the proposed development on the water environment and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and also on the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and in turn that it would not have an unacceptable impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI. The Environment Agency has made clear despite the additional submissions by the applicant that this issue has not been adequately assessed or addressed and as such they have maintained their objection to the application. Natural England and the Council's Natural Environment Team have made clear that they share the Environment Agency's concerns.

14.241 As such the proposal has to be considered to be contrary to Policies SS1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), DM1 (Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development), Policy DM3 (Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources) and DM5 (Biodiversity and Geological Interest) of the MS and Policies INT1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), ENV2 (Wildlife And Habitats), ENV3 (Green Infrastructure Network) and ENV9 (Pollution And Contaminated Land) of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan. It is also contrary to the MSP, Policy MS-1 and specifically Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) paragraphs 187 and 193.

14.242 As a result, the proposal does not comply with the Development Plan as a whole and there are no material considerations which indicate that planning permission should be granted.

14.243 In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there is no reasoned justification for the approval of Planning Application Refs. P/VOC/2023/04760 & P/VOC/2023/04761 whose purpose is to facilitate its implementation.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle, i.e. the principle of the development;

- Impacts on Heritage;
- Impact on Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use;
- Traffic and Highway Safety;
- Impacts on Amenity and the local community (Noise, Dust, Traffic, etc);
- Impacts on Ecology and the Environment;
- Planning Balance

Principle of the Development

14.244 As an established and working mineral working the principle of mineral extraction and processing is already established on the site. The substantive issue instead is concerned with whether the principle of the proposed extension of the end date of the permissions is acceptable and whether the associated changes in the phasing of the works are acceptable in terms of their environmental impacts.

14.245 There is no explicit development plan policy relating to the extension of the end date of mineral extraction and processing operations, only policies that relate to the completion of mineral working and restoration at the earliest opportunity; the MS, Policy RS1 – which is concerned with the Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse of Minerals Development states makes clear in sub-paragraph (f) that restoration should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity and that proposals should set out what the proposed timescales for restoration will be; and similarly paragraph 224 of the NPPF states that restoration and aftercare should take place at the earliest opportunity and be carried out to high environmental standards.

14.246 There is therefore no policy presumption against proposals for extensions of the end date of mineral planning permissions, but to the extent that the policy requirement is for earliest opportunity and that proposals should set out what the proposed timescales for restoration will be, then it is implicit that if there is to be an extension of the end date for restoration that there must be a rationale or justification for allowing this. In this case, the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 make clear that mineral from the north eastern extension should be processed at the existing plant site, with no intensification of production or simultaneous working of the current site and extension, and also that the mineral should be transported from the point of extraction to the processing site via internal routes within the quarry, which in this case means via the existing conveyor system. For the reasons set out in the application, as explained above these requirements, mean by definition that the existing site cannot be restored until the proposed north eastern extension has been worked, and it is therefore implicit that in complying with the Development Guidelines that the amendments to the existing permission will be required, in the event that the Committee determines that Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 for the proposed north eastern extension should be approved.

14.247 Accordingly, the proposed variations of the Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742 to revise the approved phasing of working, extend the duration of the development and allow importation of mineral and processing of mineral from extension site), should, in principle be considered to be acceptable and approved. Conversely if the Committee is

mindful to refuse Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, and that is the officer's recommendation, then there cannot be considered to be any justification to approve Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 for the proposed variations of the Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742.

Impacts on Heritage

- 14.248 The substantive discussion in relation to the impacts on heritage arising from the development, is as set out above in relation to Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753. The specific issue in relation to Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 concerns the impacts on heritage as a result the extension of the proposed end date of the permission and whether the consequential impact of the setting of Woodsford Castle can be considered to be acceptable.
- 14.249 As set out above, Historic England in their consultation response to the application has advised that the proposed 17-year extension of time to the existing quarry operations, by Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 would mean a continued harmful impact on the setting of Woodsford Castle, as a Grade 1 listed building and also that there would be a cumulative impact arising from the concurrent operation of the existing quarry, and the proposed north eastern extension
- 14.250 They consider that the degree of harm to the significance of Woodsford Castle will be "less than substantial", and that being the case, as Paragraph 213 (previously paragraph 206) of the NPPF states that any harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification. In turn paragraph 215 states that where development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. This requirement is restated in Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan
- 14.251 The basic issue in this case is that if Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, is refused, then there are no benefits to weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and consequently there is no basis upon which it can be recommended that the application can be approved, and accordingly it is recommended that the application be refused.
- 14.252 On this basis the application can, when considered in the context of the development plan as a whole, cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the MS, Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Impact on Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use;

- 14.253 The issues, including detail of the relevant policy in relation to the impacts on landscape are set out in the discussion on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/0475. As set out above the Landscape Officer, does not object to Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 as long as the phased restoration of the existing site is completed as soon as possible in each phase.

14.254 On this basis the advice is that the proposal can it be considered to be in accordance with the relevant Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM4 of the MS, Policy ENV1 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and paragraphs 187 and 224 of the NPPF.

Traffic and Highway Safety

14.255 The issues, including detail of the relevant policy in relation to the impacts on traffic and highway safety are set out in the discussion on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/0475.

14.256 The advice is that the application complies with MSP Policy DM8 and West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy COM7, that in accordance with paragraph 116 of the NPPF, there are no highway grounds for refusal of the application, and that the proposal is otherwise compliant with the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP.

Amenity (Noise, Vibration, Air Quality, Dust, and Lighting)

14.257 The issues, including detail of the relevant policy in relation to Amenity (Noise, Vibration, Air Quality, Dust, and Lighting) are set out in the discussion on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/0475.

14.258 The advice is that there are no reasons to consider that the proposed north eastern extension to Woodsford quarry or either of the two s.73 applications would be unacceptable. The proposal is thus compliant with MSP Policy DM2 and the Development Guidelines for the site set out in the MSP, West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policy ENV16 and paragraphs 198, 201 and 224 of the NPPF.

Impacts on Ecology and the Environment

14.259 The issues, including detail of the relevant policy in relation to the impacts on Ecology and the Environment are set out in the discussion on Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/0475.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

14.260 As the recommendation is to refuse Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 because of the impacts in the water environment as set out above, then there cannot be considered to be any need or justification to approve Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760 for the proposed variations of the Condition Nos. 3, 4 and 15 of Planning Permission Ref. 1/E/2005/0742.

14.261 Further, in terms of the impacts on heritage, and particularly Woodsford Castle, there cannot be considered to be any benefits to weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and consequently there is no basis upon which it can be recommended that can be approved, and accordingly it is recommended that the application be refused.

Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761

- Whether the development is acceptable in principle, i.e. the principle of the development;
- Impacts on Heritage;
- Impact on Landscape including Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use;
- Traffic and Highway Safety;
- Impacts on Amenity and the local community (Noise, Dust, Traffic, etc);
- Impacts on Ecology and the Environment;
- Planning Balance

14.262 The key issues and conclusions in relation to each of these headings are the same as set out above in relation to Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04760.

Conclusion and Planning Balance

14.263 As the recommendation is to refuse Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753 because of the impacts in the water environment as set out above, then there cannot be considered to be any need or justification to approve Planning Application Ref. P/VOC/2023/04761 for the proposed variations of the Condition Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 of Planning Permission Ref. WD/D/18/002648.

14.264 Further, in terms of the impacts on heritage, and particularly Woodsford Castle, there cannot be considered to be any benefits to weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and consequently there is no basis upon which it can be recommended that can be approved, and accordingly it is recommended that the application be refused.

15 Recommendation

REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION for the following reasons:

Application Number: P/FUL/2023/04753

1. The Application has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the water environment and in particular the River Frome Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Hurst Heath Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), and in turn that it would not have unacceptable impact on protected species of the River Frome as a Principal Salmon River, and the population of heath lobelia within the SNCI. Therefore the proposal is contrary to Policies SS1 (Presumption in favour of sustainable development), DM1 (Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development), Policies INT1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), ENV2 (Wildlife and Habitats) and Policy ENV3 (Green Infrastructure Network) and ENV 9 (Pollution and Contaminated Land)

of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), Policies DM3 (Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources) and DM5 (Biodiversity and Geological Interest) of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014). It is also contrary to the MSP, Policy MS-1 and specifically Part C i insofar as it does not adequately address the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4 set out in Appendix A, and Part C ii in that the information submitted as part of the Environmental Statement does not demonstrate that any adverse impacts associated with the development and operation have been satisfactorily mitigated. It would also be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) paragraphs 187 and 193.

2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of the application, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with the Development Guidelines for Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension in the MSP, Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Application Number: P/VOC/2023/04760

1. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there is no reasoned justification for the approval of the proposed revision of the approved phasing of working, extension of the duration of the development and importation of mineral and processing of mineral from proposed north-eastern extension, and the consequential delay in the restoration and aftercare of the site, contrary to Policy RS1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), Policy RS1 and paragraph 224 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), which seek to ensure restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity.
2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

Application Number: P/VOC/2023/04761

1. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there is no reasoned justification for the approval of

the proposed extension of the duration of the development and associated scheme submission dates, contrary to Policy RS1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), Policy RS1 and paragraph 224 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024), which seek to ensure restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity.

2. The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of Woodsford Castle, a Grade 1 Listed Building. In the absence of the approval of Planning Application Ref. P/FUL/2023/04753, there are no benefits to be weighed in the balancing exercise required by paragraph 215 of the NPPF, and Policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan, and it cannot be considered to be acceptable and in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy (2014), and paragraphs 212, 213 and 215 of the NPPF.

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Application Number:	P/FUL/2023/03982		
Site address:	Land at Hurst Farm and Station Road, Moreton, Dorchester DT2 8RA		
Proposal:	Extraction of approximately 11.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel, in phased working, together with importation of aggregates and cement, construction of a car park, internal haul road, bridged conveyor crossing, erection of a site office, aggregate processing plant, aggregate bagging plant, ready mix concrete plant, and ancillary buildings. Restoration to water bodies and agriculture and biodiversity enhancements together with public access and use of retained site office as a Visitor Centre.		
Applicant name:	Raymond Brown Quarry Products Ltd		
Case Officer:	Felicity Hart		
Ward Member(s)	Cllr Beddow and Cllr Baker		
Publicity expiry date:	2nd September 2023	Officer site visit date:	8 th & 15 th August 2023, 30 th October 2024 and 25 th June 2025
Decision due date:	30/09/2025	Ext(s) of time:	30/09/2025

1.0 This application is being considered by the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee as it is a major application.

2.0 Summary of Recommendation

2.1 GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, subject to conditions and to the completion of a satisfactory Section 106 Legal Agreement

3.0 Reason for Recommendation

3.1 As set out in the conclusions of this report, the reasons for this recommendation can be summarised as:

- The sites are allocated for mineral extraction in the Minerals Sites Plan 2019 and, as such, the principle of mineral extraction on the sites is supported.
- The proposed development would make a significant contribution to the supply of sand and gravel in the county, in particular building sand (Poole Formation sand). The approval of the proposal would increase the landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves and

thus reduce the medium/long-term need to permit extraction on other sites.

- The NPPF advises that “*great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy.*”
- It is considered that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on amenity, ecology, heritage assets, the water environment, the local landscape, or highway safety and capacity.
- There would be a loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land, grade 2 and 3a, the majority of which would permanently be lost due to mainly water body restoration of the land, however this is considered, on balance, to be acceptable, and the classification of the land and proposed afteruse was known at the time of the sites’ allocations.
- Both sites are proposed to be restored predominantly to waterbodies, agriculture, and public access/recreation (at Hurst Farm only), with significant increases in biodiversity. A permissive bridleway route is proposed to be provided in perpetuity between Moreton village and Moreton Station, as required by the allocation guidelines, which would be a benefit to the local community.
- The provision of a visitor centre and recreational route for the public around Hurst Lake, as the after-use of the Hurst Farm site would be a benefit to the local community and could potentially become a small scale local tourism destination.
- Overall, the proposal complies with the development plan as a whole.
- On balance, there are no material considerations which would warrant refusal of this application.

4.0 Key Planning Issues

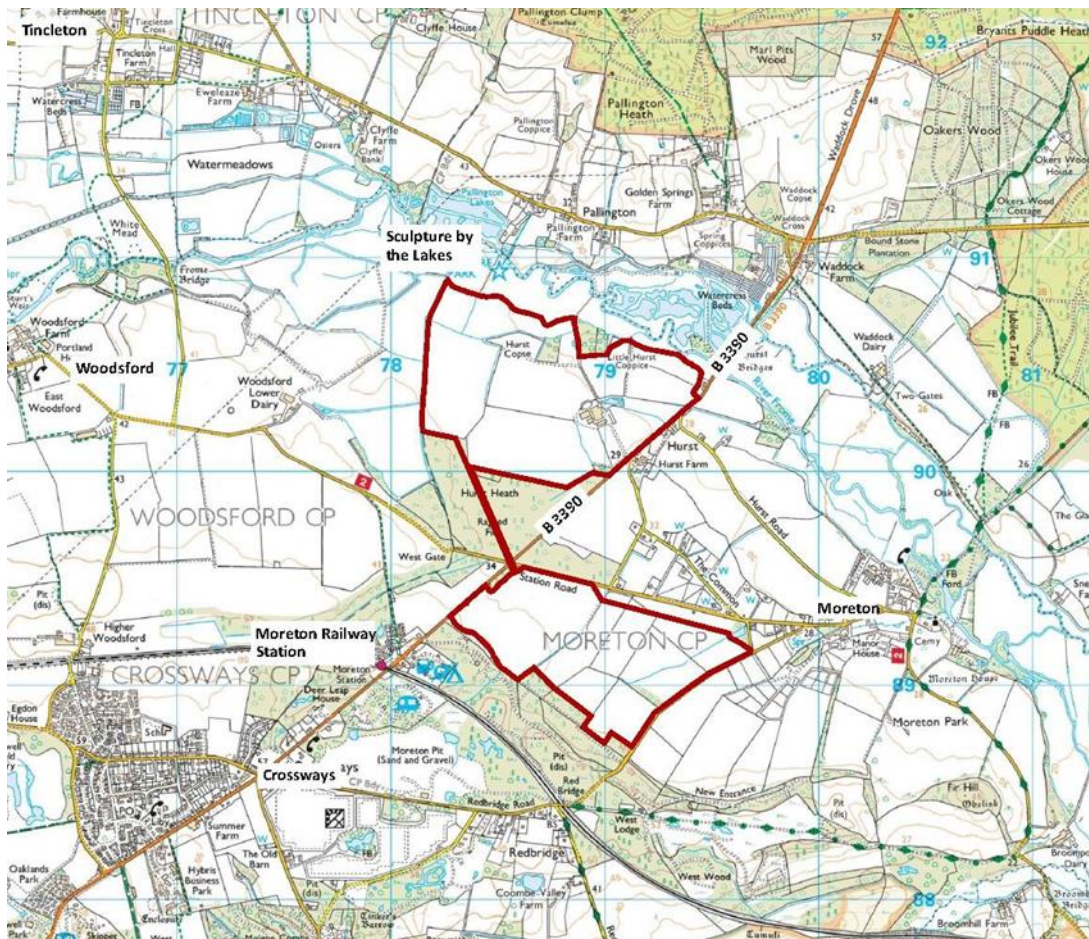
Issue	Conclusion
Principle of Development	Acceptable in principle and supported by the allocation of the sites in the Mineral Sites Plan (2019).
Loss of BMV Agricultural Land	Loss of BMV agricultural land is unavoidable as a result of extraction of mineral from the site, and the agricultural land classification was known at the time of the allocation of the site.
Impact on Amenity	No unacceptable impact on amenity as a result of noise, dust, or traffic.

Impact on Ecology and the Environment	Some impacts, loss of trees and hedgerow, however, the losses are balanced against substantial new planting provided and creation of water bodies to attract new species. The local rare plant species will be protected due to monitoring required through condition and seeds used to increase its habitat. Removal of the land from intensive agricultural use and restoring to predominantly nature conservation use will reduce nutrient loading in the River Frome.
Impact on Landscape and Heritage Assets	Some impacts, loss of trees (including veteran tree) and hedgerow, however, the losses are balanced against substantial new planting provided and creation of water bodies. Heritage assets are not adversely affected.
Impact on the Economy	Jobs created for 20 years plus possible further jobs with the visitor centre. Sale of and supply of substantial quantity of sand and gravel supporting the Dorset economy.
Highway Safety	Dorset Council Highways raises no objection
Groundwater and Flooding	LLFA raise no objection. EA consider the proposal to be acceptable subject to condition.
Permissive Bridleway	Provision by the applicant and landowner of a permissive bridleway route in perpetuity between Moreton village and Moreton Station would be a benefit to the local community.

Restoration, Aftercare, and After-Use	Provision of a visitor centre and footpath route around the lake with bird hide provision would be a community benefit as well as possibly a tourism destination.
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5.0 Site Description

- 5.1 The application site is located to the east and north-east of Moreton Station, and to the west and north-west of Moreton village. The large village of Crossways is approximately 1.2km to the south-west. The town of Dorchester is approximately 8km to the west.
- 5.2 The application site covers around 166 hectares of land and is split between two different areas. The area to the north is known as Hurst Farm (Site allocation AG6, and 79 hectares) and the other to the south is known as Station Road (Site allocation AG5, and 56 hectares). Both are separately allocated sites in the Minerals Sites Plan 2019, and both are owned by the Moreton Estate. The B3390 runs southwest/northeast between the two areas, along with a wooded area adjacent to the Hurst Farm site known as Hurst Heath. The distance between the two areas is approximately 420m.



Hurst Farm

- 5.3 To the north-west of the B3390 is Hurst Farm. Hurst Farm is currently in agricultural use, as a dairy farm. Although used for grazing, there are also some areas of arable land. The parcels of fields at Hurst Farm are mainly flat, large and open, bounded by trees and hedgerows. In addition to the Hurst Heath woodland to the south of the site, there are also two small pockets of woodland to the north: Hurst Copse and Hurst

Little Coppice.

- 5.4 The farm complex is located in the centre of the Hurst Farm area and comprises an assortment of large agricultural buildings, storage areas, and a slurry lagoon. Access to the farm is from a short track to the south leading to the B3390.
- 5.5 Hurst Farm is situated to the south of the River Frome. The River Frome flows from west to east, and at its nearest in the north-east corner, it is approximately 18m from the application site boundary. Across the site, various field ditches eventually drain into the river. There are several lakes and ponds (at least twelve) along the nearby section of the River Frome, which are known as Pallington Lakes. These are areas of former gravel extraction, created at some point between 1972 and 1997.
- 5.6 To the immediate west of Hurst Farm is Woodsford Farm. Woodsford Quarry has been operational since 2009 and currently has permission for mineral extraction up to approximately 500m from the Hurst Farm site. In addition, the area immediately to the west of the Hurst Farm site is also an allocated site in the Mineral Sites Plan (AG4), and there is currently a planning application to extend Woodsford Quarry into this area (Reference: P/FUL/2023/04753).

Station Road site

- 5.7 The Station Road site is located to the south-east of the B3390, just to the north of Moreton Station. This area currently comprises arable fields, interspersed with hedgerows and trees. The western end of the site, closest to the B3390 is a large open field, whereas the rest of the site closer to Moreton village comprises smaller fields separated by thick rows of trees/hedgerows.
- 5.8 There are no buildings on the Station Road site, and access is via farm gates on Station Road to the north and from Old Weymouth Road to the east. To the south of the site is a large, wooded area, part of which comprises restored former mineral workings. There are two residential properties within this woodland, close to the site boundary. The main railway line is located beyond the woods to the south, and beyond that is an active quarry known as Redbridge Road Quarry, which is nearing its end and will soon be restored.
- 5.9 Moreton Stream runs from the north-east corner of the Station Road site into Moreton village, and passes through the "Walled Garden," a landscape garden with a café and shop, until it eventually discharges into the River Frome further downstream. Moreton Stream has two tributaries: one is a ditch on the side of the road to the immediate north of the Station Road site, flowing from west to east; the other runs across the site itself, from the woods to the south towards the north-east. The southern half of this stream is located within the Moreton Conservation Area.

Further Description

- 5.10 At present, both the Station Road and Hurst Farm sites have no public access, both being used for agriculture. Lines of sight into the sites are primarily from nearby public roads, through gaps in the hedgerows. Both sites are flat, and very gradually slope downwards towards the north-east, towards the River Frome.
- 5.11 Moreton village is situated within a Conservation Area, which covers a large area to the east of the Station Road site and immediately to the north covering part of the lane to the north of the planning application site as well as part of the lane leading north towards the B3390. Several listed buildings are located in the vicinity as well. Along the route of the B3390, and approximately 80m to the east of the Hurst Farm site, is Hurst (South) Bridge. This bridge is narrow, allowing passage for one vehicle at a time, and is Grade II listed. [Hurst \(South\) Bridge, Moreton - 1425777 | Historic England](#)
- 5.12 The most sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the application site are nearby properties. The closest properties to the application site are Hurst Dean Cottage and Hurst Cottage (near to Hurst (South) Bridge) with their rear boundaries abutting the application site boundary. New House and the Old Coach House are both situated within the woods to the south of the Station Road site, approximately 24m and 70m from areas of proposed extraction. There are also several properties near to the application site on the north side of Station Road, and several more on the south side of the B3390 near the entrance to Hurst Farm.
- 5.13 Further out, there are more properties around Moreton Station and in Moreton village. There are also properties in Pallington, to the north of the River Frome. There is also a property at Woodsford Farm, to the west of the Hurst Farm site.
- 5.14 There are several businesses nearby. Moreton Equestrian Centre is approximately 80m to the east of the north-east corner of the Station Road site, and further beyond in that direction is the Manor House Hotel and the Walled Garden. Approximately 160m to the south-west of the Station Road site is Moreton Camping and Caravan site. Moreford Hall, while a residence, also contains an office for Shoreline Surveys. The Old Coach House, while a residence, is also the registered address for the Fortuneswell Cancer Trust.
- 5.15 Approximately 240m to the north of the northwest corner of the Hurst Farm site, is 'Sculpture by the Lakes', a sculpture park, café, and gallery. Approximately 380m to the north of the northeast corner of the Hurst Farm site is the Watercress Company, a watercress farm. Next to the Watercress farm is Wessex Trailers, a trailer dealer. Finally, there is a garage/dwelling on the B3390, close to the junction with Hurst Road, involved in the restoration of classic cars.
- 5.16 A list of nearby constraints can be found in section 8.

6 The Proposal

- 6.1 This application has been submitted by Raymond Brown Quarry Products Ltd and seeks planning permission for the winning and

working (ie. extraction) of approximately 11.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel, after which the land is proposed to be restored to water bodies, nature conservation use and agriculture, with the retention of the site office building to be used as a visitor centre once extraction has completed.

- 6.2 The proposal, which relates to both sites, connected with the red line covering the proposed conveyor bridge, would involve an output of an estimated 600,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) over 20 years, taking a further 5 years for full restoration. Therefore, planning permission is sought for a total of 25 years. It is intended that the Hurst Farm site would be worked first, taking approximately 10 years, followed by the Station Road site, also taking around 10 years.
- 6.3 The mineral to be extracted would primarily be used for construction aggregate, such as mortar and concrete. In recent years, the majority of sand and gravel extracted in Dorset is used within Dorset and the applicant hopes that most of the sand and gravel extracted will be used locally.
- 6.4 The type of mineral available at the site can be split into two categories: River Terrace sand and gravels; and Poole Formation sand. Poole Formation is a deeper geological layer than River Terrace. Poole Formation sand is typically soft sand suitable for use as building sand and used in mortar. River Terrace is a shallower layer, and the sand is typically sharp and used for concrete and paving. The applicant proposes to extract both River Terrace gravel and Poole Formation sand.

Geological Formation	Site	
	Hurst Farm (AG06)	Station Road (AG05)
River Terrace sand and gravel	2.5Mt	1.5Mt
Poole Formation sand	3.5Mt	4Mt

Working and Phasing

- 6.5 The proposal involves two methods of wet working: excavation and dredging. The excavation method involves using a manned excavator, with long-reach arms, to dig out the River Terrace sand and gravels. In all areas, this will result in a waterbody naturally forming, as the excavator removes mineral from below the water table. In most areas, the resulting waterbodies are proposed to be retained at restoration, however some of the smaller areas are proposed to be filled and restored to agricultural pasture, using a combination of processed silt and stored overburden and soils.
- 6.6 Dredging involves using a floating electric-powered dredging unit on a waterbody, with an attached underwater pipe that extracts sand using suction. This blend of water and sand is then pumped directly to the processing plant site. The dredger is not powerful enough to extract any clay. The benefit of using a dredger, in comparison to an excavator, is that a dredger is significantly quieter, and allows for much deeper extraction than would otherwise be possible.

- 6.7 The proposed depth of extraction varies considerably across the application site. The areas that would be dredged (i.e. the areas of both River Terrace and Poole Formation extraction) would be significantly deeper than the areas that would only be worked with excavators (i.e. the areas of only River Terrace extraction). The latter would only be worked to a maximum depth of approximately 4m. In contrast, the former would be worked to as deep as 25-30m. This means that significantly more Poole Formation sand would be extracted than River Terrace gravels.
- 6.8 Prior to extraction, the soils and overburden for each phase would be stripped and stored. They would be used to form temporary seeded bunds to screen noise and be a visual barrier. These materials would then later be used in the phased restoration of the site.
- 6.9 The proposal is to progressively extract and restore Hurst Farm and subsequently, Station Road. Once Hurst Farm has been mainly extracted, the conveyor route across the B3390 would then be installed and extraction of Station Road would commence. Phase 6C in Hurst Farm is proposed to be left until last, only to be worked once Station Road has been completed and as long as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Dorset Council's Natural Environment Team are all satisfied that there would be no adverse impact on the Heath Lobelia plant in the nearby Hurst Heath woodland, as the need to protect and conserve (and promote) this rare plant located in the adjacent SNCI designation at Hurst Heath is essential.
- 6.10 Monitoring will be required by the Environment Agency over the first 10 years to confirm that there would be no adverse effect, due to water levels, on the Heath Lobelia, if Phase 6C is worked. In the event that the monitoring results indicate that there would be an adverse effect on water levels and the Heath Lobelia, then the area of land shown as Phase 6C would not be worked and would simply be landscaped to fit in with the rest of the restoration of the Hurst Farm site (this would be covered in the S106 agreement). The site would be progressively worked and restored in twelve phases, with each phase anticipated to take approximately a little over a year. No more than two phases would be worked at any one time. For example, one phase might be extracting River Terrace with excavators, while the dredger would still be in use on the previous phase. This would allow for a steady supply of both gravels and sands, rather than solely one or the other.
- 6.11 The Applicant has designed the development to have a sustainable development approach, with the aspiration of achieving net zero carbon quarry operations over the lifetime of the proposal. The quarry operations have also been designed to maximise the reserve, the storage of overburden and soils and use of suitable process silt arisings with the aim to achieve a high-quality quarry restoration.
- 6.12 A number of requirements have dictated the overall design of the development including the need to protect the underlying groundwater and local hydrogeology to ensure surface water continues to flow eastwards adjoining local streams and tributaries of the River Frome. In addition, there is a need to provide sufficient capacity to store surface

water runoff from storm events and also a need to ensure that the development and adjacent areas remain safe from flooding for their lifetime taking into account the predicted effects of climate change. Other aspects that have been considered in the proposal are the need to protect and conserve and promote the rare plant species Heath Lobelia, recognised in the adjacent SNCI designation at Hurst Heath, and overall proposing to mitigate and compensate for any adverse impact on biodiversity.

Conveyor System

- 6.13 Once the mineral is extracted, it would be transported to the Plant site for processing. The Plant site is proposed to be located in the south-west corner of the Hurst Farm site, which is the point across the application site that is situated furthest from residential properties. In order to reduce the use of dump trucks within the site, the applicant proposes to use an extendable conveyor to transport the mineral extracted.
- 6.14 For River Terrace sand and gravels, transport would involve using a loading shovel to load the mineral onto a mobile hopper and into a field conveyor system. The conveyor would then transfer the mineral to the processing plant, which would separate out the material. Any silty water from the processing plant would be passed through silt lagoons to remove the silt and then into clean water lagoons.
- 6.15 Similarly, the blend of water and sand from the dredger would be pumped through a pipe adjacent to, or above, the conveyor system. The processing plant would then separate out the sand and the water, and the water would then be pumped back to the dredging lakes, maintaining water levels. Additional long-term water storage would be available, to ensure any water loss during processing is compensated for.
- 6.16 No processing plant is proposed at the Station Road site. The proposal has been designed with the construction of a temporary conveyor bridge which would cross the B3390 diagonally to connect the Station Road site with the Plant site at Hurst Farm. This conveyor crossing would pass through a wooded area between the two sites, known as either Hurst Heath or Ragged Firs. The proposed conveyor crossing would allow mineral at Station Road to be transported to the Plant site without the use of large dump trucks on the B3390.

Plant Site and Office

- 6.17 In addition to the processing plant, it is proposed that there would be an aggregate bagging plant (to bag the aggregate, ready to sell to be collected and sold to customers), a ready-mix concrete plant, and a cement silo (to store imported cement). There would be a stockyard area for storage, and a small area with portacabins, parking, and workshop. These would be located in the south west corner of the Hurst Farm site.

- 6.18 Outside of the Plant site area, and close to the access with the B3390 on the Hurst Farm site, a single storey site office is proposed, with car park. This building would be constructed as a permanent structure and is proposed to be retained upon restoration of the land, to be used as a visitor centre.

Proposed Output, Imports, and Concrete

- 6.19 In addition to the 600,000 tonnes of mineral that would be extracted from the site each year, the proposal would also involve the importation of 69,000 tonnes of aggregate and cement each year. Of the imported material, 6,000 tonnes would be cement and the remaining 63,000 tonnes would be aggregate of various types. Cement is an essential ingredient to produce concrete.
- 6.20 The ready-mix concrete plant would have an output of 60,000 tonnes per annum. It is anticipated that 12,000 tonnes of the 60,000 tonnes of concrete produced would be water content. This water weight explains the slightly higher figure of 681,000 tonnes that would be exported from the site each year, in comparison to the slightly lower figure of 669,000 tonnes extracted and imported.
- 6.21 Approximately 441,000 tonnes per annum of mineral extracted on site would be exported in bulk, without bagging.
- 6.22 The processing plant would be located in the western field of Hurst Farm and will manage mineral extracted from both Hurst Farm and Station Road.

Transport and HGVs

- 6.23 Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) exporting mineral from the application site would enter and leave from an upgraded access onto the Hurst Farm site from the B3390, in the same location as the existing farm access to Hurst Farm. Most aggregate would leave in 28 tonne articulated lorries. The proposal is expected to generate 200 two-way HGV movements per day (100 in, 100 out). A haul road to the plant site is proposed to be constructed running from the Hurst Farm entrance, along the southern perimeter of the Hurst Farm site, leading to a weighbridge and wheel-wash facility, and the remainder of the haul road to the Plant site would be unsurfaced, although a dust suppression system is proposed.
- 6.24 Three routes are proposed to be used for HGV traffic: one north to Bere Regis; one west through Crossways to Dorchester; and one south through Warmwell. It is anticipated that approximately 5% of HGVs would take the Warmwell route, and the remainder would be approximately evenly split between the other two routes.
- 6.25 The site is proposed to be progressively enclosed by perimeter bunds measuring approximately 3 metres from base to crest. These bunds will be formed from site derived excavation material with topsoil and overburden replaced in separate layers to preserve soil horizons and former suitable landscaping substrate. The bunds would be seeded

and actively managed integrating the site into the surrounding landscape. In specific locations, adjacent to Hurst Cottage and Hurst Dean Cottage and on the Station Road site adjacent to the Coach House and Moreford Hall the slope of the bunds have been designed with a 1 in 5 gradient aiming to mitigate any visual impact.

- 6.26 The bunds will serve several functions, storage of topsoil and subsoils until they are required for restoration, screening of operations from relevant viewpoints and noise attenuation.

Hours

- 6.27 The proposed hours of operation (i.e. working hours and vehicle movements) are:

07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, and
07:00 to 13:00 on Saturday.

No operations are proposed to take place on Sundays or on Public Holidays.

Water environment

- 6.28 No dewatering is proposed at either Hurst Farm or Station Road. It is proposed that the river terrace gravel deposits will be worked wet and the deeper pool formation sand will be extracted by dredger. Mineral washing will be facilitated via licenced abstraction from the clean water lagoon. Resulting silt laden waters will be sent to the silt ponds for treatment via settlement before being recirculated to the clean water lagoon and re-used for mineral washing.

Restoration

- 6.29 The restoration of the majority of the application site would be to a series of large-scale waterbodies with some areas of wetland, hydrologically connected to the River Frome. The proposed water-based restoration scheme would incorporate new habitats, through lake margins, wetlands, and tree, scrub, and hedgerow planting. This is designed to attract species of wetland birds and create habitat for protected mammal species such as Otter and Water Vole.
- 6.30 The Station Road site is also proposed to have a restoration that is predominantly water based and a green infrastructure of linked, retained hedgerow and habitat corridors across the valley is envisaged. The two large lakes – one at Hurst Farm and one at Station Road – would feature very prominently at the respective sites. These would be some of the largest lakes in Dorset and some of the deepest in the South-West.
- 6.31 Restoration will also include returning some small specific fields back to agricultural use, both in the north and the south. These would be used for lowland grazing.
- 6.32 Overall, a variety of different habitats are proposed, aiming to provide

biodiversity enhancement. These habitats include the following: 11.49 hectares of native woodland; 2320m of native hedgerow with hedgerow trees, 23.22 hectares of lowland/acidic/neutral grassland and 6.61 hectares of reed bed and marginal aquatic planting.

Afteruse

- 6.33 It is proposed that the Hurst Farm site would have a mixed after use, combining nature conservation and public access. The large lake at Hurst Farm would provide some shallow margins as well as some very deep areas. The shallow margins have been designed to attract birds. A footpath leading away from the visitor centre is proposed to be created, encircling the lake, with the route arriving back at the visitor centre. Part of the footpath would incorporate a boardwalk constructed over the marshier areas. It is also proposed that some bird hides would be constructed along the circular lake route. The building that will have initially been constructed and used as the quarry operator's site office, next to the lake, would later be converted and used as a visitor centre, once quarry operations have ceased. A car park is proposed to be created next to the building adjacent to it, which could accommodate a coach. It is envisaged that the visitor centre would be open to the public and to youth groups, schools and organisations wishing to learn more about the nature conservation of the area. Parking is intended to be charged for, and this is covered in the draft S.106 agreement.
- 6.34 The Station Road site, once extraction is completed would also become primarily a water body landscape. This site is not proposed to have public access though, with the exception of land close to the northern and eastern boundaries which will become the permissive off-road route linking Moreton village and Moreton station, as described below. The applicant has agreed that the route can be constructed as a bridleway, thereby allowing cyclists and horse riders as well as pedestrians, a safe off-road route. A gate is located at the halfway point on Station Road, which will allow users the opportunity to exit onto the National Cycle Way. At a later date, when Hurst Farm visitor centre opens, the route will provide a safer opportunity for users to get from Moreton Station to the visitor centre and lake.

Permissive route link from Moreton Station to Moreton Village

- 6.35 As part of the Mineral Sites Plan (2019), the development guidelines for the Station Road site require that a safe pedestrian access be provided between Moreton village and Moreton Station over land owned by the Moreton Estate. At present, there is no pedestrian link between the two areas, with pedestrians having to walk a long distance on the unsafe verge of the B3390. This application now includes a proposal for a permissive bridleway which would be made available and retained in perpetuity. From Moreton village, the route would pass along to the south of Station Road, turn south being routed along land parallel to and alongside the B3990, eventually crossing over the B3390 and continuing (as a pavement) along the northern side of the B3390 towards Moreton Station. The details of the route are discussed

in later sections.

7 Planning History

- 7.1 In 2013, the Moreton Estate nominated the application site for inclusion in what would later become the adopted Minerals Sites Plan 2019, in response to a 'call for sites.' Station Road was initially referred to as AS25 and was eventually allocated as AG5. Hurst Farm was initially referred to as AS26 and was eventually allocated as AG6.
- 7.2 The Hurst Farm site had been considered for mineral extraction much earlier, with reference in a 1993 document to the site being "*a preferred area for sand and gravel extraction*," and referred to as SG3. The site was surveyed with boreholes in 1978 by the British Geological Survey (BGS), for its mineral potential.
- 7.3 The current application was submitted in July 2023. Prior to this, the Council had issued an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Opinion in February 2023, confirming that the development would require an Environmental Statement (ES).
- 7.4 In response to the comments of consultees, the applicant submitted additional information under Regulation 25 of the EIA Regulations, in order to enable the authority to reach an appropriate conclusion on the likely significant effects of the development, as well as to address any other issues highlighted within the supporting documents under Section 62(3) of the TCPA 1990. These additional information documents were submitted in three batches: one in February 2024, another in May 2024, and a final one in October 2024.
- 7.5 The previous planning application history of the site comprises primarily a series of agricultural buildings and extensions, none of which are of any relevance to this application.

8 Constraints and Relevant Designations

- 8.1 Relevant designations within or in the vicinity of the application site, and other features worthy of note, are listed below.
- 8.2 Landscape Designations
- National Character Areas (Natural England): Dorset Heaths
 - Landscape Character Areas (Dorset Council): Valley Pasture (>90%) and Heath/Farmland Mosaic (<10%).
- 8.3 Ecological Designations
- Ramsar
 - Dorset Heathlands; approximately 2050m to the north-east, 2050m to the east, 820m to the south, and 2710m to the south-west
 - Special Protection Area (SPA)

- Dorset Heathlands: approximately 2050m to the north-east, 2050m to the east, 820m to the south, and 2710m to the south-west
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
 - Dorset Heaths: approximately 2050m to the north-east, 2050m to the east, 820m to the south, and 2710m to the south-west
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - River Frome: approximately 10m to the north-east
 - Winfrith Heath: approximately 820m to the south
 - Warmwell Heath: approximately 2710m to the south-west
 - Oakers Wood: approximately 1km to the north-east
 - Oakers Bog: approximately 2km to the north-east
 - Turner's Puddle Heath: approximately 1.85km to the east
- Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)
 - Hurst heath: borders the site, to the south of Hurst Farm
 -
 - Redbridge: approximately 235m to the south
- Sheep's Walk Pit: approximately 330m to the south Possible Areas of Ancient Woodland
 - 'Hurst Copse', within the site, and 'Little Hurst Coppice', bordering the site, are areas which could be Ancient Woodland.

8.4 Heritage Assets Listed buildings:

- Lilac Cottage (Grade II): approximately 116m to the east
- East Cottage (Grade II): approximately 105m to the east
- Hurst Green Cottage (Grade II): approximately 240m to the east
- Hurst Dairy House (Grade II): approximately 22m to the east
- Barn, East of Hurst Dairy House (Grade II): approximately 48m to the east
- Pallington Farm House (Grade II): approximately 415m to the north
- Bwthyn (Grade II): approximately 445m to the north
- Hendra Cottage (Grade II): approximately 275m to the east
- Grave of Lawrence of Arabia (Grade II): approximately 700m to

the east Conservation Areas:

- Moreton Conservation Area: approximately 60m to the east

8.5 Tree Protection Orders

- PDC/TPO 496: Covers the eastern half of the Station Road site. Originally issued by Purbeck District Council.
- TPO 2023/0005: Covers most of the Hurst Farm site, and the

western edge of the Station Road site. Issued in 2023, in anticipation of this application.

8.6 Rights of Way Most relevant:

- S60/3 Footpath: approximately 270m to the west
- SE4/18 Footpath: approximately 600m to the north-east
- SE4/24 and SE4/23 Bridleways: approximately 730m to the north
- S43/3 Footpath: approximately 1.25km to the north

8.7 National Cycleway

The national cycle route passes close to the site, along Station Road crossing north-south over the B3390.

9 Representations

- 9.1 66 representations have been received from individuals, 58 of which were objections, and 8 were comments. The objections and comments from individuals to the proposed development are detailed below.

Issues raised in representations

9.2 Traffic

A significant number of representations raised concerns over the predicted increase in HGV traffic as a result of the development. Most mention the current frequent use of local roads by HGVs, and the negative impact on amenity these already cause. Some refer to the fact that the current road infrastructure is unfit for use by HGVs, particularly on the route through Warmwell village. Others reference a lack of safety features for pedestrians and cyclists in the area. Other objections referencing traffic included: impact on health; the effect of increased weight of the trucks on the road; impact of increased traffic on local business; references to the speed limit in the area; impact on local wildlife; and increased noise.

- 9.3 Several suggestions were provided in representations on how to mitigate the impact of any future increase in HGV traffic: upgrade bridges along the route before operations commence; speed management and cameras; improvement of the current road; installation of safety features in areas frequently used by pedestrians and cyclists such as barriers and designated walking and cycling paths to the train station; upgrading road classifications; ensure that HGVs do not go north via the village of Affpuddle or south via Warmwell; and a discount on council tax for residents most affected by the increase in traffic.

9.4 Noise

Over 30 objections to noise pollution, originating from both the quarry itself and the traffic resulting from it. Some made reference to possible noise produced by the quarry outside of normal working hours, with a concern about noise in the evenings and on weekends.

9.5 Natural Environment

Several objections referenced the 'destruction' of the local countryside, and adverse impacts on ecology, with references to the presence of rare plants (specifically Heath Lobelia), bats, and protected trees. There were also references to other wildlife in the area, including deer, voles, dormice and owls.

9.6 Restoration

Five objections to the proposed restoration plan to create several large water bodies, with some saying that lakes would be inappropriate, potentially dangerous, and negative for wildlife. Some preferred the land to be entirely restored to agriculture.

- 9.7 Dust
Around 20 objections to the creation of dust through the quarry operations or movement of traffic. Some referred to the impact on human health of particulates including exacerbation of asthma symptoms and other serious conditions.
- 9.8 Cement Plant
Eight objections to the cement plant proposed on the site, citing a further increase in traffic, and claiming it as unnecessary and excessive.
- 9.9 Hydrology
Seven Objections regarding the hydrology of the area, citing proximity to the river Frome, the effect of operations on the local water table, and the risks of flooding associated with the development.
- 9.10 Conveyor Bridge
Six objections to the conveyor bridge, with some citing the visual impact of the structure.
- 9.11 Cycling
Six objections to a lack of safe cycle routes in the area, and concerns for cyclists as a result of increased HGV traffic.
- 9.12 Tourism
Three objections to the impact of the development on tourism in the area, with references made to walkers and eco-tourism.
- 9.13 Visual Impact
Three objections to the wider visual impact of the development.
- 9.14 Dredging
Two objections in relation to proposed dredging activity, with concerns over the operator/applicants lack of direct experience with the technique.
- 9.15 Light Pollution
One objection to the light pollution associated with evening operating hours at the development site.
- 9.16 Cumulative Impacts
A few objections referenced the already established quarries in the area, as well as other allocated mineral sites, and claimed that a further quarry in the area was unnecessary and/or inappropriate.

Groups and Organisations

Frome Residents Against Mineral Extraction

- 9.17 FRAME is a local group of residents which was first formed to oppose the allocation of several sites near to the River Frome within the Mineral Sites Plan 2019 and claims to represent 80 residents. FRAME objects to the application.
- 9.18 FRAME argues that the application does not comply with the Plan, as the amount of mineral proposed to be extracted is almost double the figure in the allocations and therefore calls for extraction to be reduced. FRAME is concerned that the development would cause the destruction of valuable farmland, create vast acreages of lakes and result in unacceptable stress on all aspects of the environment.

Dorset CPRE

- 9.19 CPRE objects to the application citing issues in relation to road maintenance and controls over timings in the safe use of a road system likely to need a classification upgrade.

Hallam Land Management

- 9.20 Nexus Planning, a planning consultancy, wrote a letter on behalf of Hallam Land Management, a land promoter with an interest in future housing development around Crossways. They object to the application, primarily due to the increase in HGV movements.
- 9.21 They express concern that the initial Transport Assessment does not consider the likely development of 500 dwellings south of Warmwell Road, which received a resolution to grant subject to a satisfactory Section 106 (WD/D/16/000378). Further, they argue that possible future allocations for housing around Crossways, such as those in the January 2021 Draft Local Plan, should be assessed as part of the Transport Assessment for this application.

Wessex Trailers

- 9.22 Wessex Trailers is a local business, a short distance to the north-east of the Hurst Farm site, on the B3390. They manufacture and supply trailers, of the kind that is pulled by vehicles. They express concern for the *“increased number of heavy vehicles travelling at high speeds along this stretch of the road down to the narrow Hurst Bridges.”* They call for speed management of this section of the B3390, where they have witnessed several near misses.

Shoreline Surveys Ltd

- 9.23 The company is based at Moreford Hall, which is one of the closest residential properties to the Station Road site. They object to the increased traffic, noise, dust, visual impact, ecological damage, because of the proposed development. They oppose the proposal for a cement plant and oppose the longer anticipated lifespan of the quarry. They oppose the creation of the conveyor crossing and consider that the level of noise generated by the development would

be illegal and against their Article 8 Human Rights.

Parish Councils

Moreton Parish Council

- 9.24 The Parish submitted their response on 29/09/23, and Object. The main basis of the objection is that the proposal does not comply with the Plan, and the Parish considers that the scheme proposed is quite different to that which the Inspector endorsed at the Plan Examination.
- 9.25 The Parish Council would like to see Station Road worked first, instead of Hurst Farm, and they would also like to see the level of extraction reduced to be similar to the figure in the Plan. They make the point that the larger quantity of extraction will mean that less land is restored to agriculture and larger lakes will be formed. They have concerns about the number of HGVs proposed and ask that this number is significantly reduced. They also ask that most HGVs should go via Bere Regis, rather than Crossways.
- 9.26 The Parish also raises concerns regarding potential noise from the proposed quarries.

Bere Regis Parish Council

- 9.27 The Parish submitted their responses on 18/08/23 and 25/03/24. Bere Regis Parish Council does not oppose the extraction of sand and gravel but note that a large quantity of the vehicle movements would take place through the village, along the C6. Although a strategic route, the C6 Rye Hill, is classified as a C road and is already taking more heavy traffic than many A roads in the county. The Parish Council therefore requests that the road be upgraded, with significant safety measures put in place before excavation takes place.

Affpuddle & Turnerspudde Parish Council

- 9.28 The Parish submitted their response on 31/08/23, and Object. They express concern that HGV traffic may travel through Affpuddle along the B3390, or along other unsuitable narrow country lanes elsewhere in the parish. In addition, the parish considers that Hurst Bridge requires highway changes to be a safe route for the increased number of HGVs; they suggest a formal traffic control installed, either by a priority system, or a traffic light system, together with more restricted speed limit areas to improve road safety.

Knightsford Parish Council (Group)

- 9.29 Knightsford Parish Council is a group that includes Woodsford, Tingleton, West Knighton, and West Stafford Parish Councils.

- 9.30 The Parish submitted their response on 29/09/23, and Object. They express concern over increased HGV traffic, and question how these movements will be managed when railway crossings, or other main roads, are closed. They express concern that drivers may not adhere to the outlined routes and may take shortcuts through villages. They call for the B3390 to have a reduced speed limit, traffic calming, and a speed camera.
- 9.31 The Parish opposes the construction of the conveyor crossing over the B3390 and believe that an underground option is viable instead. They question how the plant site area will be lit. They are concerned that stockpiles may be high enough to be visible from outside of the plant site area, and that the office/parking may be visible from the B3390.
- 9.32 The Parish notes that the restoration will be phased but are sceptical that this will be enforced and asks the Council to insist on timely restoration.
- 9.33 The Parish is concerned that the proposed permissive footpath will place users in danger: instead, they suggest a route through the woods to the south of the Station Road site, or a footpath to the western edge of the Station Road site, with a new pedestrian crossing and a reduced speed limit.
- 9.34 The Parish includes detailed comments regarding the potential noise impact of the development, which is one of their primary concerns, and make comments on various specific noise sources based on their direct experience of living near quarries, as well as suggest various mitigation measures. In turn, they discuss: the processing plant, acoustic barriers, dredging pump, meteorological and topographical effects, stone crushing, excavators, dumper trucks, scalping screens, conveyors, caterpillar tracks, reverse alarms, etc.

Warmwell Parish Council

- 9.35 The Parish submitted their response on 29/09/23, and Object. They support the comments of Crossways and Moreton Parish Councils.
- 9.36 Noting that the proposal would involve 5% of HGVs passing through Warmwell, the Parish request that:
- “a) no trucks through Warmwell*
 - b) if this is not possible, at least that the 5% should be enforceable with a planning condition*
 - c) we will also work with Crossways and Moreton to get an overall speed reduction on the B3390 (possibly the “20splenty” initiative), and*
 - d) as the B3390 is a relatively narrow road through Warmwell, we request that only smaller trucks (not 40 tonne trucks) should be permitted to come this way.”*

Crossways Parish Council

- 9.37 The Parish submitted their response on 07/09/23 and stated that *“Crossways Parish supports the views of Moreton Parish Council.”*

Further Consultation responses

Dorset Council – Landscape

Comments received 03/11/23

- 9.38 The Landscape Officer raised concerns over potential adverse landscape and visual impacts as a result of the proposals, which could result in the character of the landscape being significantly and permanently changed due to the proposed restoration to lakes. The long-term temporary mineral working operations would also change the landscape.
- 9.39 Further Information was requested to allow a more comprehensive assessment of the impacts which could arise from the proposed development. Visualisation images are requested depicting how the development may look over time in order to inform the LVIA process as the ones provided do not adequately demonstrate future key landscape and visual changes that will result from the proposals. It is expected that these will be taken from each of the named viewpoints in the winter and show placement of all proposed structures on site, as the provided images from the summer do not depict the ‘worst case’ visibility or show the scale of development on the site.
- 9.40 Further evidence of the visual impacts of the widening of the Hust Farm access junction is also requested alongside any details of the associated visibility splays and wheel wash facility and restoration details for the access and road areas. Details of the proposed restoration and the visitor centre and details/elevations of all buildings and structures in the processing, plant and concrete plant areas are also requested.
- 9.41 The cumulative impacts of the development alongside any impacts from Woodsford should be assessed and measures taken to reduce them. Consideration must be made over the restoration plan including further drawings regarding the final state of the access junctions and future projects, and details provided over planting plans, schedules and management programmes.
- 9.42 Further comment received on 25/06/2024 which provided greater detail regarding the proposal, including cumulative impact with Woodsford, impact on landscape character, landscape and visual impacts. However, there are still elements which will create landscape impact that must be mitigated against.
- 9.43 Updated plans and illustrations show a more realistic change for the entrances, buildings and car parks, and removal of G12 causing more landscape and visual impact from key viewpoints.

- 9.44 A new landscape scheme has been proposed to mitigate adverse impacts alongside restoration planting on the eastern margin which can be required as pre-commencement conditions. It is recommended that this includes plans for screening, banking and native planting to include larger tree species to compensate for proposed tree removal. Additional drawings are also required to demonstrate the final schemes for the site entrances at their final stage, including plans for tarmac removal, if used, and removal of gates, fencing and narrowing of entrances for restoration.

Dorset Council – Archaeology

- 9.45 Comment received 12/12/23. No Objection
- Notes that there “are areas of both sites where there appear to be significant archaeological remains.” Suggests a standard condition to secure archaeological fieldwork and publication.

Dorset Council - Rights of Way

Comment received 26th August 2025

- 9.47 The width of the proposed Permissive Bridleway should be 3 metres and it would be preferred if the route could be dedicated as a definitive Bridleway and is correctly signed and the public know they can use it.
- 9.48 The surfacing of the bridleway should be 200mm deep compacted sub-base of 40mm stone, 50mm deep compacted mid layer of 20mm stone, 10mm deep compacted top layer of 5mm to dust. It should be cambered to allow water run off and be constructed so it is suitable access by wheelchairs, pushchairs, cyclists, horses and pedestrians.
- 9.49 The bridleway shall have gates constructed and installed to BS 5709:2018 and a corral at roadsides as per BHS guidance for road crossings.
- 9.50 The bridge that will be needed at the Moreton village end of the bridleway will need to be constructed to Dorset Council specifications suitable for bridleway use. Fencing required alongside the bridleway should be stock fence with plain wire top strand, with no barbed wire.
- Maintenance of the bridleway needs to be undertaken with any side growth cut back to the width of the route.
- 9.51 The Rights of Way team supports this application due to the excellent sustainable transport links to be created between Moreton Station and Moreton village and the extra facilities and access to the countryside that this will provide, along with the proposed Visitor Centre and lakes being an additional amenity in the future. It provides a positive contribution towards the National Cycle Network as well.

Dorset Council – Minerals & Waste Policy

Comment received 27/10/23

- 9.52 In estimating the 'landbank' as of 12th October 2023, the Dorset Minerals and Waste Policy Team noted that the 'landbank' for Poole Formation sand has fallen below the 7 years set out in the NPPF and was estimated at 6.1 years. In contrast, the landbank for River Terrace sand and gravel was estimated at 8.6 years and the combined landbank for both was estimated at exactly 7.0 years.
- 9.53 In relation to the increased tonnage of mineral proposed to be extracted, relative to the figures in the Plan, it is noted that "there are benefits in taking more aggregate from the proposed sites, in that for a given area being dug, there will be a greater yield – meaning less (or delayed) impacts in other areas of Dorset." Although the proposed annual extraction figure of 600,000 tpa is considered as "high," it is noted that with "this high level of extraction the period of disruption during working is reduced, as the site will be worked more quickly."
- 9.54 Nonetheless, it is accepted that "the amount proposed for extraction significantly exceeds what is identified in the allocation in the MSP. This does not make the proposal unacceptable..." The comment states that: the fact that the sites are allocated in the Plan for aggregate extraction is material and establishes the principle of mineral extraction at these locations. The proposed development may significantly exceed the amount identified in the Minerals Sites Plan but this does not detract from the fact that the sites are allocated."

Updated comment received 27th August 2025

- 9.54 Based on 2024 figures, it can be confirmed that at the end of 2024, the land bank for River Terrace gravel was 9.35 years, while the land bank for Poole Formation sand was 6.73 years. The combined River Terrace and Poole Formation land bank was 7.68 years. All figures are based on the use of the rolling 10 years sales average. Towards the end of August 2025, it was estimated that the land bank for River Terrace sand and gravel had fallen to 8.9 years, while for Poole Formation sand the land bank was estimated to be approximately 6.1 years. The combined land bank was estimated at 7.1 years.
- 9.55 If Hurst Farm /Station Road projected figures are added to the confirmed landbank at the end of 2024 the Landbank figure for River Terrace gravel would rise to 18.24 years. (This has been calculated without any other sites becoming available, just Hurst Farm/Station Road). If the calculation is done for Poole Formation sand, the Landbank figure would rise to 16.23 years, again, only adding in the increase from Hurst Farm/Station Road. These figures show that a substantial increase in the Landbank would occur if planning permission is granted for this planning application. Although the current Landbank figures are over the minimum 7 years that the NPPF says should be the minimum Landbank kept for sand and gravel, there is no upper limit recommended. Para. 226 of the NPPF

states that Minerals Planning Authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates, and it is considered that the projected higher Landbank figures that would be available, should this application be given planning permission, would contribute to the steady and adequate supply in Dorset over the next 20 years.

Dorset Council – Natural Environment Team

Comments received on 16/10/23

- 9.56 Survey data including European Protected Species (EPS) to inform mitigation measures to avoid or minimise impacts is incomplete, notably for Hazel dormice and bats. The ecological assessment and proposed mitigation and compensation measures should be provided to the authority prior to determination. Planning authorities have a legal duty to regard biodiversity, including the need for adequate information regarding EPS prior to determining an application. This is in accordance with case law which determined that to leave surveys for EPS to planning condition would be to disregard the requirements of the relevant regulations (often referred to as the Habitats Regs). Government circular 06/05 helps to interpret the legislation.

Bats

- 9.57 Static detector data and analysis for the spring sampling is not available. It is not feasible to identify all calls from recordings to species level, so many recordings are attributed to long-eared and Myotis groups. A trapping exercise would have established whether Bechstein's bats (Annex II rare bat species associated with woodland) are using the site.
- 9.58 No timing of recordings or possibility of nearby roosts in relation to the site's potential value as a Core Sustainance Zone evident in the report. Recorded use of the site by Barbastelle bats is notable.
- 9.59 The report states that bat species found in the zone of influence as "relatively diverse," but this may be understated. With 11 species recorded despite limitations in identifying all calls, this likely represents a minimum count. Given that 17 bat species breed in the UK, recording 11 suggests the site supports a higher level of bat diversity.
- 9.60 NET consider the data and interpretation of available data to be inadequate to fully inform the application and consider that this should be addressed prior to determination of the application. However, in a later comment NET confirm that submitted Dormice and Bat surveys are now acceptable and no further ecological surveys are necessary before determination.

Planning Obligations

- 9.61 If planning permission is granted, planning obligations and conditions

must ensure detailed plans for protected species mitigation, compensation, and enhancement are submitted and agreed before any development phase begins. This includes Construction Environmental Management Plans and final Ecological Mitigation and Management Plans, with specific monitoring and remediation measures for hydrology. All documents should comply with BS42020:2013, the biodiversity code of practice for planning and development.

Trees

- 9.62 NET supports the DC Tree Officer's comments and highlights the need to address air quality impacts, particularly dust, on sensitive ecological features during operations and restoration. This includes veteran and notable trees, and hedgerows. Further consideration should be given to the potential translocation of veteran trees:
- 9.62.1 [Government guidance \(Jan 2022\)](#)
- 9.62.2 [Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) and
- 9.62.3 [The England Trees Action Plan \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Restoration

- 9.63 The restoration plan should be revised to capitalise upon the opportunity to revert to a pre-large field pattern, a more ambitious wetland interface with the River Frome, increase the range of Heath Lobelia and general diversity with natural regenerative management potentially including grazing.
- 9.64 The provision of smaller ponds is welcome. Additionally, provision of wetland habitat linked to and bolstering the existing riparian corridor would support the identified range of priority associated bird species and contribute a significant biodiversity net gain.
- 9.65 The soils within the site lend themselves well to heath/acid/scrubby habitats. It would be desirable to see a greater variety of habitats included in the restoration scheme, including establishing satellite colonies of Heath lobelia by translocation in suitable locations. Further consideration in discussion with the MPA would be welcomed.

Second comment received 31st July 2024

- 9.66 The submitted Dormice and Bat surveys are acceptable and no further ecological surveys are necessary before determination.

Proposed removal of Veteran Tree 174

- 9.67 Retention of veteran trees must be in-line with the National Planning Policy Guidance Mitigation Hierarchy. Development proposals that would result in the removal of veteran trees should be refused

planning permission, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. If so, a suitable compensation strategy must be in place and agreed before determination.

9.68 Compensatory measures might include:

- a) translocation of the tree to another part of the site
- b) management, set out in a management plan, of existing woodland under the Moreton Estate's control, including mapped removal of rhododendron
- c) individual trees, particularly oaks, within managed woodland and in retained treelines and hedgerows to be identified as future veterans and management secured to enhance their condition
- d) identification of trees that could be subject to veteranisation techniques
- e) creation of new areas of naturalistic woodland planting designed to restore ecological function

Restoration Plan and Afteruse

9.69 A bespoke approach to restoration should aim to achieve varied ecological functionality that can be managed sustainably in the long-term. Rather than strict like-for-like replacement of habitats lost, those created should deliver the equivalent value with a more landscape-sensitive approach.

9.70 The interface between the Hurst Lake (the proposed lake in the centre of the Hurst Farm site) and the surrounding areas to the north, east, and west should be reconsidered. There is an opportunity for extending the wetland habitats created into these areas, providing a more graduated ecotone, in contrast to some of the abrupt edges of the lake in the current proposed plan.

9.71 Where well justified, removal of additional hedgerow to facilitate a more integrated and extensive wetland creation would be welcomed. Rather than compensatory hedgerow planting to recreate lost fields and hedges, to the west and east of the lake, approaches delivering more diverse habitats with the same ecological function should be included, such as double hedgerows and the creation of scalloped edges and small copses to facilitate more extensive grazing post-restoration. This could avoid the need to create traditional field parcels and allow grazing to help manage the restoration site, reducing manual or mechanical intervention.

9.72 This approach should be achievable with minimal change to the working phases. For example, the areas of proposed pasture to the north-west, north-east, and east of the Hurst Lake would all be worked wet during the development, naturally forming into waterbodies, which are then proposed to be backfilled with overburden and soil to restore above water level. Restoring these areas to wetland/lake margins should not therefore be a task onerous to the operator. This may result in a surplus of overburden and soil, which could be used in restoring the rest of the site, or to reduce the depth of the large lake creating shallow gradients

- 9.73 Opportunity for a greater ecological connection between Hurst Lake and the proposed shallow pond in the north-east corner. The proposed outfall between the two could be expanded. The high quality oak trees in the hedgerows to the north and east of the buildings in this area should be retained and safeguarded.
- 9.74 Consideration of the siting of proposed wading shallows for birds is recommended; where adjacent to tall vegetation birds may be more vulnerable to predators.
- 9.75 Extensive shallows and pools over a wider, open area are likely to be more deliverable and successful than several discreet wetland shallows. Areas for potential recreation and amenity should be identified and zoned with clear parameters for acceptable future use identified.
- 9.76 The applicant has committed to nature conservation management of the site and Hurst Heath area for a period of 30 years. Expressions of interest from nature conservation bodies more appropriately placed to take on the long-term management of the site, should be sought by the applicant. Currently unclear as to who will operate the retained proposed visitor centre. Proposed use in-keeping with the nature conservation aims and the Restoration Vision in the Minerals Sites Plan (2019) is encouraged.
- 9.77 The specification for planting and seed mixes for grassland restoration must be consistent within all submitted plans and documents. The Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (EMMP) and the Restoration scheme plans contain conflicting specifications. The applicant's Response Note to Ecology Consultees (February 2024) highlights that the Restoration Plan will need to agree with the EMMP regarding the grassland seed-mix used.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 9.78 The EMMP and Biodiversity gain plan proposes potential future marketing of 'surplus' biodiversity units on the site, where measurable Biodiversity Net Gain exceeds the statutory requirement of 10%.
- 9.79 Clear identification of how 'surplus' in biodiversity unit generation is calculated is required. Enhancement of the site post-restoration to deliver higher quality habitats is a policy requirement under Policy DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy 2014.
- 9.80 To deliver additionality, post-development habitat creation and enhancement must be demonstrated as being over and above what is required to fulfil policy requirements.

Heath Lobelia

- 9.81 Ensuring the survival and long-term management and improvement of this rare plant species is of the highest priority.
- 9.82 Commitment to a long-term management plan secured by a Legal

Agreement for the Hurst Heath area is welcomed.

- 9.83 The Species Recovery Trust helps in the understanding of the needs of this complex plant, informing the actions within the final management plan. It is recommended that the Trust are involved throughout, including discharge of condition stage and over the decades of management. Translocation (through seed collection and dispersal) of the Heath Lobelia plant to other areas of the site and surrounding estate land should be seriously considered as part of the management plan.
- 9.84 Prior to determination it would be desirable to see at least the specific identification of the areas in which Rhododendron is present and will be managed as close to elimination as possible.
- 9.85 Nearby mineral working may lower the water table at Hurst Heath, to the detriment of the Heath Lobelia plant. Although the applicant predicts this to be highly unlikely, they accept that the possibility cannot be ruled out until post-extraction groundwater monitoring provides the data for actual drawdown.
- 9.86 Accurate monitoring and sufficient number and location of monitoring boreholes is very important.
- 9.87 In principle, the applicant's proposal to only work the nearest area of extraction to Hurst Heath is acceptable, subject to sufficient monitoring and appropriately worded conditions. It would be helpful to see consultation between the Species Recovery Trust and the applicant included in the management plan for reassurance.

Informal comments received from NET 23rd August 2024

- 9.88 NET welcomes the increased wetland areas in the north-west section of the site and enhanced connectivity, somewhat constrained by the landform, between the lake and the waterbody in the north-east part of the site.
- 9.89 The possibility of a walking route circumnavigating the lake was discussed. In principle this is acceptable provided there is sufficient buffering between the lake and marginal area and the path. The lake edge should be adequately buffered and designed to avoid disturbance from visitors. Locations of bird hides and the access to those will need to be carefully designed to minimise disturbance to wildlife.
- 9.90 Recreational uses - from an ecological perspective it would be advisable to restrict recreation to educational and bird watching activity. It is also recommended that dogs should not be permitted, to fit with a nature conservation primary objective whilst other sites with a recreational primary purpose are available in the locality.
- 9.91 Re: Long-term management of the site, it's recommended that this is undertaken by a body with a proven track record in nature conservation management. Failing this, the authority will need legally securable assurances that expert advice on the

management, monitoring, and reporting of certain ecological receptors and the wider site during the 30-year period will be taken.

Dorset Council Tree Officer

Comments received 3rd October 2023

- 9.92 Area TPO 496, covering the southern part of the Station Road site was served in 2018 following the felling of a suspected veteran oak. A new TPO (TPO/2023/0005) was subsequently served as an area TPO and later modified, protecting key trees, groups, and woodlands across the two sites.
- 9.93 An Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) were submitted as part of this application. A generic AMS such as this was considered by the DC Tree Officer to be inappropriate given the scale of this site and the operations proposed.
- 9.94 As the TPP does not follow the phased plans as submitted, it is not clear when fencing will be erected around the site. As neither the AIA nor the AMS discuss the restoration of the site and how this relates to protective measures, it is not clear how long the fencing will remain in-situ.
- 9.95 The TPP should follow the phased plans, with a timeline for the installation and removal of protective measures detailed within the AMS. Currently neither the AMS nor the TP are suitable to be used as an on-site 'working document'.

Removal of features

- 9.96 The Barrells Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) notes the loss of the following features:
- Category A: 1 veteran, 16 individual trees, 1 part of one group and a number of stems within two woodlands.
Category B: 4 individual Trees, 2 groups, and part of 4 groups.
Category C: 4 individuals, 8 groups, parts of 2 groups, 4 hedges and parts of 5 hedges
- 9.97 The loss of the higher quality trees and groups are regrettable; however, it is noted that there will be a significant amount of compensatory planting.
- 9.98 The loss of the veteran (V174) has been proposed to enable maximum extraction between phase 10 and 12 and facilitate retention of the features between phase 9A and 9B; which also includes 2 further veterans.
- 9.99 If the veteran is to be lost, sufficient compensation must therefore be secured by way of condition. This should follow the 'Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions', which notes that loss of veteran trees can be partially compensated by planting young trees of the same species with space around each one to develop an open crown, and new

trees near to the trees they're replacing.

Little Hurst Coppice and Hurst Copse

- 9.100 An earlier (June 2022) ecology statement produced as part of the Scoping Opinion highlighted the potential for 'Hurst Copse' and 'Little Hurst Coppice' to contain some ancient woodland indicator species and stated that the status and composition of these woodlands would be investigated further to inform the Environmental Statement. However, the current ecology report makes no reference to these woodlands or to the presence of veteran trees on site.
- 9.101 Given the earlier comments, a detailed assessment of these woodlands is required as this could influence the layout and design of the site.

Impact of Extraction Operations Bunds

- 9.102 Section 1.2 of the AIA references the design of the temporary soil bunds. These have been pulled out from the veteran trees buffer zone, and it is unclear what will separate them from the mining activities/act as a buffer. V194 is particularly close to the top of the excavation.
- 9.103 V55 is situated adjacent to the main haul road. The buffer zone is shown to extend south of the existing track with no protective measures shown to accommodate this. It would be reasonable to expect ground protection on the track due to increased use and some form of fencing to limit access in the buffer area south of the track.
- 9.104 Clarity is sought as to why there is no protective fencing for a number of trees in the southern portion of the site north of phase C.
- 9.105 Storage bunds containing soil which will remain for more than 6 months or over the winter period should be grassed over, weed controlled and maintained to the satisfaction of the MPA. Care must be taken when applying herbicides in close vicinity of trees.

Dust

- 9.106 High dust levels and leaf coverage can negatively impact tree health and development, affect stomatal/lenticel function, inhibit growth and development of leaves, seed and fruit and reduce the photosynthetic rate.
- 9.107 The receptors identified within the dust management plan are predominantly adjacent dwellings. Only Hurst Heath SNCI is noted as a receptor expected to experience up to moderate adverse effects and mitigation is proposed – why is other vegetation not also recognised? Do trees, including veteran trees, fall into the 'vegetation' category

- 9.108 There is likely to be dust generation from vehicle movement and transportation of the minerals, and the main haul road runs immediately adjacent to at least three veterans, Little Hurst woodland and a significant number of A category trees. Possible dust generation in the restoration phase of transporting the infill and restoring the land is not mentioned.

Hydrology

- 9.109 The bunds will consist of free draining material and the risk of water pooling in high rainfall events is considered low. However, the lowering of groundwater levels and its impact on trees does not however appear to have been covered. Altering the water table will have negative consequences for older and veteran trees in periods of drought. Possible impacts of warmer, drier summers should be further explored to determine the likely level of impact and possible management techniques to ensure retention of these important features.

Conveyor Corridor

- 9.110 The TPP states trees will be retained where possible subject to design. The Dorset Tree Officer was unable to locate the full design proposals for the conveyor or specific details of tree removal. As removal of trees adjacent to the road to facilitate this are likely to have a greater impact on public amenity it is important to seek clarity on the detailed design and implications.

New Planting

- 9.111 The Dorset Tree Officer was unable to locate the detailed restoration scheme, as specified by the project Landscape Architect, that is referred to in section 1.10 of the planning statement. Only drawing HF/523/16-3A provided an overview of the restoration layout.
- 9.112 Section 6.40 refers to 725m² of planting completed in April 2023 ahead of planning consent being undertaken and a further 15,190m² to be carried out post planting consent.
- 9.113 Section 6.58 notes the different elements of habitat creation achieved in restoration which includes 1.49 hectares of native woodland/scrub planting and 2320m of native hedgerow planting.
- 9.114 The Dorset Tree Officer commends this, but notes the lack of detail on the species to be used and maintenance or management of the planting that has already been undertaken or is due to go in. A comprehensive landscaping scheme and management plan covering an appropriate time length (in excess of the 25 years) should be secured by way of condition.
- 9.115 If approved, the Dorset Tree Officer also asks for details of the specific compensatory planting for the veterans and for other valued

trees (for example southwest of Hurst Farm) to be clarified to ensure sufficient compensation is secured. This should be in accordance with the Government Standing advice.

Further comment received from Dorset Tree Officer on 23rd May 2024.

- 9.116 I have reviewed the amended plans and AIA and have the following comments to make. I have also revisited some of the earlier issues raised, as on further reflection I do not feel adequate responses have been provided.

Removal of Veteran Tree V174

- 9.117 In the government guidance Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK veteran trees are defined as irreplaceable habitats. Their features, such as branch death and hollowing, contribute to their exceptional biodiversity, cultural and heritage value.

- 9.118 Under the title 'Making Decisions' it states the following;

'When making planning decisions, you should consider:

- *conserving and enhancing biodiversity*
- *avoiding and reducing the level of impact of the proposed development on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees*

You should refuse planning permission if development will result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees unless both of the following applies:

- *there are wholly exceptional reasons*
- *there's a suitable compensation strategy in place (this must not be a part of considerations of wholly exceptional reasons) - see paragraphs 33 and 34 of the [planning practice guidance on compensation guidance](#)*

You should make decisions in line with paragraph 180 (c) of the NPPF.

(NB- this has since been updated to para 186 (c) which states "development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons 67 and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

(d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate".

**Footnote 67: For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit*

would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat.)

Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees are irreplaceable. Therefore, you should not consider proposed compensation measures as part of your assessment of the merits of the development proposal.'

- 9.119 The AIA refers to the site's restoration plans as the compensation strategy for the veteran proposed for removal. Compensation measures should be a last resort and considered only once the existence of 'wholly exceptional circumstances have been ascertained (para 033 of Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance).
- 9.120 A statement justifying the removal of veteran V174 was requested previously, with the planning agent confirming on site it is to enable maximum extraction between phase 10 & 12 and facilitate retention of the features between phase 9A and 9B, which also includes 2 further veterans.
- 9.121 The AIA refers to strategic importance to justify removal of V174 but when considering the above government guidance, the justification does not appear as a wholly exceptional reason. The justification lacks detail and appears to be solely about maximising return.
- 9.122 Given the above guidance and responses from the agent and arboriculturist, the primary position should be to retain all veteran trees on site – this should be explored further given the current lack of a wholly exceptional reason and specific compensation strategy.

Removal of G12

- 9.123 Trees to the southwest of Hurst Farm (G12 protected by TPO/2023/005) are still proposed for removal, which is disappointing given the DC Senior Landscape Architects comments highlighting the significant visual contribution made by this group. The retention of this feature is supported on amenity grounds, and this is reflected by the modified TPO.

Bunds and tree protection measures

- 9.124 The revised plans show the fencing extended around trees to the north of phase 9c and increased fencing around Veteran tree 55.
- 9.125 On reflection and further discussion with the adjacent site at Woodsford Quarry, I question the justification provided for placement of the bunds within the RPAs of the remaining trees.
- 9.126 In section 1.2 of the AIA, Barrells specifically refer to paragraph 7.4.4.4 of BS5837:2012 to justify the placement of bunds within the root protection areas, following original concerns raised at my initial site meeting.
- 9.127 Section 7.4 of the BS specifically relates to permanent hard surfacing

within the RPA; with the raising of levels typically used to create a level subbase if the existing ground is undulating.

- 9.128 I struggle to see the comparison between marginally altering levels for new hard surfacing and significantly altering levels to facilitate the storage of soils in up to and in some cases over 30% of the RPA.
- 9.129 The issue of the AMS not being site specific and too generalised for such a long-term operation is compounded by this - it fails to address the soil handling method for building and grading the bunds and later dismantling/excavating the bunds for restoration.
- 9.130 It is expected that heavy machinery will be required to facilitate this and these will require access to both build, shape and dismantle; which if the bunds are situated within root protection areas leaves them vulnerable to damage.
- 9.131 It is not practicable to expect all tree protective measures to be implemented prior to commencement and a phased approach with a timeline for the installation and removal detailed in phase specific tree protection plans is preferred. These more detailed documents could be conditioned as a pre-commencement condition for each phase with an overarching TPP and AMS if it can be assured that the bunds will be pulled out of the RPA's.

Recommendations

- 9.132 AIA and AMS are not able to fully demonstrate that the operations can be undertaken with minimal risk of adverse impact on trees to be retained. The proposal cannot be supported if the bunds remain within the root protection areas of trees.
- 9.133 The DC Senior Landscape architects' comments in respect of retaining G12 and are supported and it is agreed that it should be retained and protected in accordance with the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (MSP) 2019.
- 9.134 The removal of the veteran tree V174 is contrary to government standing advice in relation to ancient woods, ancient trees and veterans: advice for making planning decisions and paragraph 186 (c) of the NPPF. The primary position should be to retain all veteran trees on site, and I would suggest that this is explored further given the lack of wholly exceptional reasons and specific compensation strategy.

Further comment received from Dorset Tree Officer on 17th Oct 2024. Encroachment into root protection areas

- 9.135 Much improved, there is still some creep into the RPAs of a number of trees to the south of, and in between phases 7a and 7b, along with T200 which conflicts with section 2.2 of the AIA. There doesn't appear to be any specific barriers to roots here i.e. ditches to justify this.

Loss of V174 & Compensation Strategy

- 9.136 Compensation strategy details 1 hectare of new woodland, rhododendron management on and around the estate, the translocation of V174 into the new woodland and the identification of 50 future on-site veterans – all commendable, but decision maker has to determine if the reasons of economic loss are wholly exceptional to justify the loss of V174. Government guidance states that “The compensation strategy must not be a part of consideration of wholly exceptional reasons” and planning should be refused if the above is not met.
- 9.137 An overview of the translocation methodology for V174 has been detailed within section 1.6 of the AIA, but not later in the section 2.5 table ‘Phasing summary for tree protection’.
- 9.138 Moving a tree of this size does not yet appear to have been tried and tested within the UK, with larger equipment seemingly patented to the US. If this option is approved the largest sized root ball which is feasible for movement should be retained and full details of its translocation must be outlined in the veteran management plan discussed below.
- 9.139 Being placed in an area of new woodland, it is important sufficient space is given around V174 in its new position to avoid creating competition for light, water or nutrients.
- 9.140 In respect of the rhododendron management, reference has been made within section 1.12 of the AIA to a full and detailed Rhododendron management plan. It is understood that this will be secured via the section 106 agreement.
- 9.141 Regarding future veteran management, section 1.13 refers to a long-term veteran tree management plan. As many of the trees are protected on site by TPO (TPO/2023/005 & PDC/TPO 496) the production of this must be secured by condition if you are minded to grant consent. It is recommended that the management plan be inclusive of but not limited to the following:
- detailed survey of all veteran trees on site
 - methodology and aftercare for translocating V174 with specialist input/supervision and detailed timeline.
 - methodology for planting new area of woodland around V174
 - future management of land surrounding veteran trees and future identified veterans to prevent overcrowding from new planting/compaction from site users
 - Scope of any tree works to current or future on-site veterans (works to be undertaken by registered contractors only and TPO Tree work application required).

Restoration and new planting

- 9.142 Section 1.14 briefly refers to new planting and the restoration proposals. The latest restoration scheme includes the outline of several of the veteran trees (mostly in the station road site). It is not clear what the circle denotes but it has potentially highlighted areas of planting within the veteran buffer zones for trees V202, V205, V109

and V55.

- 9.143 Space must be afforded to the veterans for restoration as well – the planting locations of new trees should not interfere with the veterans as they grow and develop.
- 9.144 Wading shallows encroach into the buffer zone of V194 - wetland creation needs to be moved outside of the buffer zone.
- 9.145 Footpath proposed north of phase 5 with rolled gravel surface that is not mentioned in the AIA. As this runs through the buffer zone of V55 a no-dig solution is recommended to improve the existing site conditions. This should be detailed within the TPP and AMS.
- 9.146 The new outfall between Hurst Lake and the proposed shallow pond in the north-east corner is not mentioned with the AIA.
- 9.147 It is understood that more detailed restoration plans are to be conditioned and therefore further detail on tree protection could also be secured.

Permissive Footpath along B3390

- 9.148 It is disappointing that a no dig solution is considered unviable along the northern side of the B3390. There are examples of other local authorities accepting and adopting paths with alternative technical solutions near trees [Adopted-Road-and-Footpath-examples-Cellweb-TRP.pdf \(geosyn.co.uk\)](http://geosyn.co.uk/Adopted-Road-and-Footpath-examples-Cellweb-TRP.pdf)
- 9.149 The use of no-dig for the remaining pathway is supported and a full spec of this should be secured via condition of a detailed AMS.

Conditions:

- 9.150 It is preferable for the tree protection conditions to be phased with pre-commencement site visits on each new phase. Attendees should include the appointed tree specialist, quarry site manager and LPA tree officer/representative to discuss appropriate tree protection measures. Photographic monitoring records must be kept available for inspection.

Suggested condition: Before any preparatory works or extraction works commence on each phase, a pre-commencement meeting shall be held on site and attended by the developers appointed arboricultural consultant, the site manager/foreman and a representative from the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to discuss details of the working procedures and agree either the precise position of the approved tree protection measures to be installed OR that all tree protection measures have been installed in accordance with the approved tree protection plan. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details, or any variation as may subsequently be agreed in writing by the LPA.

- 9.151 In respect of a more detailed AMS, I have included Barrells suggested heads of terms within a suggested condition as they cover what is required.

Suggested condition: Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved (including all preparatory work), a scheme for the protection of the retained trees, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 (or updated standards at that time), including phase specific tree protection plan(s) (TPP) and a phase detailed arboricultural method statement (AMS) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

9.152 Specific issues to be dealt with in the TPPs (Tree Protection Plans) and AMS (Arboricultural Management Scheme):

- 1. Preparation of a written site management protocol for dealing with tree issues, to be incorporated into formal site management procedures, and to specifically include induction training for all operatives related to tree protection.*
- 2. The order of work on site, including phased site clearance, the installation of protective measures, the phasing of successive work locations, the installation of the conveyor and bridge, the phased removal of tree protection, and restoration works.*
- 3. A specification for tree protection measures as each phase progresses and an updated plan indicating the alignment of these measures.*
- 4. Who will be responsible for protecting the trees on site.*
- 5. Detailed proposals for inspecting and supervising the tree protection by a suitably qualified tree specialist. To include details of how this will be reported to the LPA.*
- 6. How accidents and emergencies involving trees will be managed, including accidental damage to roots and their treatment.*
- 7. Details of facilitation pruning and access into site. What size vehicles will be used under canopies and will large machinery be lifted over trees.*
- 8. The parking arrangements for workers and visitors.*
- 9. A schedule of emergency contact numbers relating to trees.*
- 10. Areas for loading and unloading of materials and storage of materials and plant.*
- 11. Where site facilities will be located and when will they be installed.*
- 12. How machinery and equipment (such as excavators, cranes and their loads, concrete pumps and piling rigs) will enter, move on, work on, and leave the site.*
- 13. Pollution control to specifically consider chemical storage and wheel washing facilities in relation to trees.*
- 14. Recycling and storage of waste in relation to trees.*
- 15. Details of earthworks, grading and mounding and removal*

of spoil, including any planned lowering or raising of ground levels.

16. Precise services locations, including the method of excavation when near trees.

17. Details and precise cross-sections for the conveyor support structure and overbridge is to be installed.

18. A full specification and methodology of new footpath link from Moreton Village to the station and permissive path around Hurst Lake.

19. Details of wetland creation adjacent to RPAs, and how the movement of excavators will be managed.

20. Methods to improve the rooting environment for retained and proposed trees and landscaping

Each phase of extraction and restoration thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details. Reason: Required prior to commencement of extraction to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that the trees to be retained will not be damaged during extraction or restoration and to protect and enhance the appearance and character of the site and locality.

Suggest a condition is added to say the following: There shall be no excavation or raising or lowering of levels within the prescribed root protection area or buffer zones of retained trees unless agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Further comment received from Dorset Tree Officer on 4th December 2024.

9.153 Having reviewed the following: Barrell's Tree Protection Plan 22117-13A and Barrell's Arboricultural Impact Appraisal and Method Statement 22117-A1A6- CA it is noted that the encroachment into the RPAs as detailed in point 1 of the comments made on 17th October 2024 has been addressed. The remaining comments made on that date still stand.

9.154 It is considered useful to provide some definitions in respect of what is a veteran tree and why it is considered irreplaceable. Text has been taken from the Woodland Trust's [Ancient and veteran trees. An assessment guide](#). (Gilmartin 2022).

"A veteran is a mature tree that has developed valuable decaying wood features, not necessarily as a consequence of time, but due to its life or environment. Veteran trees may not be very old, but share similarities with ancient trees, such as trunk or branch hollowing, or significant amounts of other decaying wood."

"Ancient and veteran trees are disproportionately valuable parts of the natural environment . They are keystone structures, containing unique microhabitats for specialist wildlife, and are host to hundreds

of species at any one time. For this reason, they are vital attributes of woodland sites and open wooded habitats. Trees outside of woods, i.e. scattered and hedgerow trees, are also particularly important for landscape connectivity. Where trees have persisted for a long time, so too has the soil around and beneath them. This soil reserve, and community of life within, is therefore also old and is precious. Much is still to be discovered about the ground below ancient and veteran trees, but research has shown that it holds unique communities, including that of mycorrhizal fungi – the fungi that make up the ‘wood-wide web’ – which trade nutrients in exchange for sugar made by the trees through photosynthesis.”

- 9.155 And the NPPF’s definition of an “Ancient or veteran tree” is.. “A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.”

Dorset Council – Highways

Comments submitted on 08/08/23, and again on 14/09/23 and 05/03/24. No Objection.

- 9.156 Highways consider that the “increase of HGV movements is deemed acceptable and can be safely accommodated on the network.” Overall, they consider that the impact of the development would not be severe and therefore consider that there are no highway grounds for refusal.
- 9.157 They draw attention to the highway assessments conducted by the applicant, including the Transport Management Plan, and consider that it “*contributes towards the mitigation of the proposed development which includes an agreed route distribution which seeks to ensure that all HGVs use the strategic highway network as much as possible and aims to avoid sensitive areas.*”
- 9.158 The Highways Officer suggests that several conditions be added if permission is granted, regarding submission of a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP), visibility splays, access construction, and turning/manoeuvring.

Dorset Council – Transport Planning

Comments received 01/09/2023

- 9.159 Transport Planning was asked to comment on the need for or feasibility of a pedestrian crossing on the B3390, in connection with the new proposed footpath. They recognise the “*lack of pedestrian facilities connecting Moreton Station to Moreton village,*” and note

the emphasis given in the Mineral Sites Plan to this connection.

- 9.160 They note that “*none of the 14 collisions within the PIA study area involved pedestrians, whilst two slight collisions involved cyclists.*” Although agreeing that “*a crossing would improve pedestrian safety across the B3390,*” they list a series of requirements that would need to be met before a proposal for a crossing could be supported by the authority. This includes further assessments, possible traffic calming measures, lighting, signage, etc.

Second comment received on 2nd November 2024

- 9.161 The applicant submitted a Transport Assessment Modelling Note 8th May 2024 to consider the cumulative impacts of the proposal in relation to a development located on Land South of Warmwell Road Crossways WD/D/16/000378. They conducted sensitivity testing on the relevant junction’s, using industry standard tools, and it was concluded that there are no detrimental highway impacts envisaged with both development proposals operating at the same time. The Highway Authority find this to be acceptable.

Station Road access

- 9.162 The access onto Station Road required modification and the applicant submitted a revised swept path and visibility splay drawing to reflect these changes. A banks person will be in place to manage HGV movements during the temporary construction phase before it reverts to standard vehicle use. The Highway Authority find this to be acceptable.

The permissive route from Moreton Station to Moreton village

- 9.163 These permissive bridleway/footpath proposals have been subject to an independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. An element of these works will become footway works facilitated on to the adjacent adopted public highway and be subject to a section 278 of the Highways Act 1980. The Highway Development team have found this to be acceptable and will require a Grampian condition.
- 9.164 The Highway Authority has no objection to the following conditions being added and consolidated with its previous responses 8 August 2023 and 20 September 2023:

Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the visibility splay areas as shown on the submitted plans must be cleared/excavated to a level not exceeding 0.6 metres above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway. The splay areas must thereafter be maintained and kept free from all obstructions.

Reason: To ensure that a vehicle can see or be seen when exiting the access.

Grampian condition

Before the development hereby approved is occupied or utilised the following works must have been constructed to the specification of the Planning Authority in accordance with: Drawing 174-0006-0015 P01 Footpath and Crossing Design (or similar scheme to be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority).

Reason: These specified works are seen as a pre-requisite for allowing the development to proceed, providing the necessary highway infrastructure improvements to mitigate the likely impact of the proposal.

Informative Note Proposed: Grampian

In addition to this permission, the highway improvement(s) referred to in the recommended condition above must be carried out to the specification and satisfaction of the Highway Authority in consultation with the Planning Authority and it will be necessary to enter into an agreement, under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, with the Highway Authority, before any works commence on the site.

Dorset Council – Bridges Team

Submitted on 30th January 2024. No Objection

- 9.165 Notes that none of the bridges along the three HGV routes in the Traffic Management Plan are weight restricted and considers that “there is no reason to limit the number of vehicle movements for structural reasons.”
- 9.166 On the condition of Hurst Bridge, they note that the “bridge is in sound structural condition,” and that “defects noted are age and exposure related deterioration as a result of weathering.”

Dorset Council – Conservation Officer

Comments submitted 20th October 2023. No Objection

- 9.167 Overall, the Conservation Officer finds that the scheme would cause no harm (either directly or indirectly) to any heritage asset, except for Hurst Bridge (1425777).
- 9.168 The Bridge is Grade II listed, and the Conservation Officer finds there would be ‘less than substantial harm’, due to “a perceived increase of industrial scale transport,” as well as “tangible concerns with regard the future structural integrity.”
- 9.169 He concludes that any harm can be adequately mitigated by securing from the applicant “an agreement for an appropriate schedule of periodic structural investigation and monitoring,” and

that terms of liability in case of damage should be explored.

Dorset Council – Environmental Health

Air Quality and Dust Comments

- 9.170 Environmental Health have viewed the following documents of the Environmental Statement:

Chapter 7, Hurst Farm and Station Road Quarry Proposal, Chapter 7 Air Quality and Dust, by DustScan AQ, dated July 2023

- 9.171 The assessment considers transport emissions associated with the proposed development for the earliest year of operation (2024). It concludes the air quality impact will be negligible and proposed development will not result in a significant negative effect on local air quality.

Chapter 7.1 Dust Assessment, Hurst Farm and Station Road by DustScan AQ, dated May 2023

- 9.172 This assessment considers impacts from ‘disamenity’ (or ‘nuisance’) dust, associated with annoyance. The assessment concludes that the vast majority of receptors are likely to experience no more the negligible effects as a result of the proposed development. Slight adverse effects are predicted at receptors to the east of Hurst Farm and to the north of Station Road during site preparation and restoration activities, however a Dust Management Plan has been produced to mitigate these effects. I would suggest a condition to ensure the following document is implemented should planning permission be granted:

- Dust Management Plan, Hurst Farm, by DustScan AQ

Dorset Council – Flood Risk

Comments submitted 04/08/23, and again on 20/02/24. No Objection.

- 9.173 Dorset Council Flood Risk team are satisfied with the assessments submitted by the applicant and conclude that: “it is reasonable to assume that the peak surface water runoff rates and volumes will be less than the current rates and this may go some way to reducing downstream flood risk.” They suggest two standard pre-commencement conditions in relation to surface water management and drainage.

Environment Agency

First comment 18/09/23, object.

- 9.174 Insufficient information to determine risks to water environment

Groundwater and hydrology

- 9.175 Geological evidence
- Require evidence of geological logs for boreholes and geological sections to review hydraulic connection between operations and River Frome
- 9.176 Groundwater level data - logger and wet conditions
- Require flow data for winter 2022/23 to show full range in levels after 2022 drought
- 9.177 Permeability distribution and hydraulic impacts due to abstraction at 1B
- Clarification in differences between groundwater level shown on contour plot at 29-29.5m AOD and proposed clean water lagoon level at 28.5m AOD which implies a gradient will be present from the river at 29-30m AOD
- 9.178 Flow constraints implications for working 5.3.3.12
- Clarification of measures in place to accommodate operations during constrained abstraction periods
- 9.179 Moreton Estate network
- Clarification on whether MEN is a private network or mains supply as it does not appear to be licensed as private but is referred to as private by applicant
- 9.180 Dredging operations water management scheme and transfer license requirements
- Clarification of whether dredging will require a transfer license
 - Further information confirming operational controls on pond and groundwater systems to manage impacts during dredging
- 9.181 Environmental monitoring plan - survey levels for the river Frome channel and water levels related to the channel and restoration lake levels and potential for river loss
- Confirmation of the relative groundwater vs river level related to the assessed current river level and confirmation of current conditions by surveying between Pallington Lakes and Moreton
 - Restored groundwater level contour plot to be provided to conclude risk to river drainage patterns and to the SSSI watercourse between Pallington and Waddock Cross
- 9.182** Environmental Management Plan to describe the constraints on operation lake levels, groundwater levels and river levels to demonstrate effective mitigation and prevent impact to the River

From ensuring a positive hydraulic gradient towards the river

9.183 Woodsford Quarry

- Clarification on whether preference to not work simultaneously with Woodsford Quarry is due to hydraulic risk, and what the risk is

9.184 Hurst Dene Cottage well

- Derogation agreement to be drawn up between the applicant and well owner to allow for an abstraction license to be issued in the case that the private water supply was derogated
- Clarification with regard to impacts on private well supply

9.185 Water quality

- Clarification on how restoration works will reduce fine sediment load to the River Frome with concern over how this will be achieved

9.186 Hydrology

- Further detail with regard to the difference in flow further downstream via spot gauges taken at a range of flows to assess scale of loss to the main channel
- Current hydrological impact assessment based on December to March and should show full year
- Flow comparison is to the total flow of the Dorchester gauging station not taking account of a split in the channel between the two - this should be better understood with further spot gauging in each of the channels
- Clarification of whether data taken by telemetric flow loggers at points 2 and 4 are continuous and reliability of data

Clarification on whether evaporation from ponds has been considered/estimated

9.187 Fisheries and biodiversity

More detailed understanding of hydrology and more information on scale of change to flow of main river as change to groundwater flow away from the river between Waddock Cross and Pallington lakes and changes in flows could impact salmon habitat and population

9.188 Flood risk

Fluvial flood extents/levels

FRA does not consider fluvial flood risk in sufficient detail

Update FRA to consider fluvial flood risk, improved flood extents and flood level estimation for present day and future due to climate

change to confirm works do not impact fluvial flood risk

- 9.189 Advice to LPA and applicant
Environmental Enhancement

Second comment received 15/02/2024 - Objection

Request further information/clarification
Groundwater and hydrology

- 9.190 Geological evidence
Require hydrogeological section combining details of working depths and groundwater contour for interpretation of flows in Hurst Farm ditch and clean water lagoon excavation and extraction

- 9.191 Groundwater level data record
New data shows limited groundwater head range across the working area with potential northerly flow

- 9.192 Permeability distribution and hydraulic impacts
Unclear how raising of lagoon levels to 29.3mAOD will be maintained in permeable gravels and subject to Woodsford quarry workings and abstraction

- 9.193 Flow constraints implications for working
Confirmation of calculations for water lost and stored for compensation as they are sensitive in relation to the works
Clarification on amount to be abstracted from clean water lagoon
Details for storage of compensation water and mitigation of loss due to operations

- 9.194 Moreton Estate network
Information accepted

- 9.195 Dredging operations water management scheme and transfer licence requirements

Dredging licence required
Confirmation of restoration flow regime

- 9.196 Environmental monitoring plan - survey levels for the River Frome channel and water levels related to the channel and restoration lake levels and potential for river loss.

Third EA Comment received 16/12/2024

- 9.197 The EA confirms that they would be able to withdraw their

objection, provided the specific conditions and informatives are included, if permission is granted.

Groundwater Protection

- 9.198 The EA has set out a number of conditions relating to the surface water and groundwater at the site and in the River Frome adjacent. The EA considers that the acceptability of the scheme is dependent on water management and on the relationship between the levels at the site and in the River Frome.
- 9.199 The protection of water levels, flows and quality in the River Frome, particularly at low flow, is considered to be a very significant issue because of the SSSI status of this Chalk stream. The successful operation of any quarry site in this location will require a clear baseline data set on which to establish working and restoration water levels as part of the 'wet working' operation.
- 9.200 Pre-development conditions proposed 16th December 2024 (Note these have been updated in May 2025)
- 9.201 **Condition 1** Scheme of surface water and groundwater monitoring
Condition 2 Baseline report
Condition 3 Wet working proposed water levels
Condition 4 Monitoring scheme to protect the SNCI community.
Condition 5 Protection of flows in Hurst Ditch and Moreton Stream
Condition 6 Overall plan of working for Hurst Farm, Station Road and Woodsford Quarry
Condition 10 Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)
Condition 7 Annual monitoring reports
Condition 8 - restoration monitoring
Condition 9 no import of materials to site, or land raising in Flood Zone 3

Fourth EA comment received 21st May 2025

- 9.202 Conclude that the EA's overall position on the application remains the same. The details submitted for Hurst Farm give sufficient confidence that the impacts on the River Frome can be adequately managed through conditions. Hurst Farm and Station Road sites are capable of being extracted using wet working techniques which are not based on the need to dewater strata. If permission is granted it will be on the basis that the mineral workings and all water uses will be required to maintain water levels above defined river levels.

New EA Suggested Conditions (May 2025)

9.203 EA's Legal advice says that Condition 1 (Interpretive conceptual model update report and monitoring and mitigation plan) should be amended to:

"A revised scheme of surface water and groundwater monitoring and reporting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. Extraction of minerals shall not commence until (a) surface water and groundwater monitoring as specified in the revised scheme of surface water and groundwater monitoring have been undertaken for a continuous period of not less than 12 months and (b) an interpretive conceptual model update report and monitoring and education plan has been submitted to and approved by the mineral planning authority. Thereafter, mineral extraction

shall at all times be fully in conformity with the monitoring and mitigation plan as approved."

Condition 2 (Wet working proposed water levels) should read "Extraction of minerals shall not commence until scheme of wet working and water level monitoring has been submitted to and approved in writing by the mineral planning authority. Working and monitoring shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Condition 3 (Annual Monitoring Reports) This condition needs to be specific enough to ensure that the information required is provided as part of these reports and these need a method of approval to ensure they are compliant.

"Annual surface and groundwater monitoring report shall be submitted to the mineral planning authority by the 1st of March each year for approval in writing. The reports shall include the extent of the works in the past 12 months, observed water levels and flows and compliance/non-compliance issues in relation to the approved monitoring and mitigation plan. Continued mineral extraction shall at all times be fully in conformity with the approved monitoring and mitigation plan and minerals planning authority approval."

Condition 4 (Restoration monitoring and verification)

"Prior to the commencement of any restoration works, a revised restoration plan, based on the interpretive conceptual model and water level monitoring data shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Mineral Planning Authority. The revised plan will include post restoration monitoring and a verification plan following the completion of works. Restoration will be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme."

Condition 5 (Storage of oils, fuels and chemicals)

"Details of any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals, associated with this development shall be submitted to and approved by the mineral planning authority. The details shall include:

- Secondary containment that is impermeable to both the fuel, oil, chemical and water, with no opening used to drain the system
- a minimum volume of secondary containment at least equivalent to the capacity of the tank plus 10% or, if there is more than one tank in the secondary containment, at least equivalent to the capacity of the largest tank plus 10% or 25% of the total tank capacity, whichever is greatest
- all fill points, vents, gauges and sight gauge located within the secondary containment
- associated above ground pipe work protected from accidental damage
- the low ground pipe work having no mechanical joints, accept at inspection hatches and have either leak detection equipment installed or regular leak checks
- all fill points and tank vent pipe outlets designed to discharge downwards into the bund

The scheme shall be implemented as approved prior to any storage of oils fuels or chemicals.

Natural England

9.204 Comment submitted on 12th January 2024

NE has Concerns regarding the proposed restoration of land at Station Road, as the stream is not shown on the restoration plans and recommendations on how to change the plan to incorporate it into restoration in order to reduce nitrogen loads into the river.

9.205 Recommendations for the Hurst Heath area improvement of mitigation measures due to uncertainty over their sufficiency to protect heath lobelia. Requirement of more extensive piezometer data to monitor the blocking and filling of drains and ditches and a more robust and aggressive rhododendron management strategy to prevent a substantial rhododendron problem past the currently quoted 30 year plan. Further critique is made of the 100 year vision for Hurst Heath; there is recommendation of faster action to be taken in hydrological restoration and balancing the open and wooded areas, especially with regard to the proposed 'reduction' of rhododendron and holm oak in favour of eradication.

9.206 There is a further question over whether the proposed planting of heath lobelia within the site is sufficiently ambitious to secure the necessary mitigation, and it is recommended that a more extensive metapopulation is established to protect against hydrological changes and other unpredictable factors.

Second comment received 21st March 2025

9.207 Effects on the River Frome SSSI – NE notes that the EA previously objected due to the risk of potential harm to the river and Natural

England has also objected on the same grounds. The EA has now withdrawn their objection on the basis that any significant harm to the river can be avoided if appropriate conditions are applied. Natural England also withdraws its objection provided that it is subject to these conditions

9.208 Hurst Heath, heath lobelia and SNCI - regarding the issue of the risk to the heath lobelia population from the working of the nearest phase 6C to the lobelia site, we have considered the monitoring and mitigation approach to the concerns and in principle are happy that the scheme once agreed through a planning condition would be able to reduce the risk to the lobelia population to an acceptable level. There is much common ground regarding removal of rhododendron and holm oak and hydrological restoration and a detailed ecological management plan secured through the S106 should be acceptable.

9.209 Hydrological restoration should be integrated with heath lobelia conservation and it would be better in the long term if new heath lobelia locations are not established where they are dependent on continued artificial drainage. Regarding the timing of the removal of rhododendron we would also note that the continued authorisation of herbicide that is vital in the control of rhododendron of regrowth cannot be guaranteed. This is a further factor that supports the need for early removal of as much mature rhododendron as possible. We welcome the improvements to the overall restoration plan for Hurst Farm itself.

Third comment received 6th August 2025

9.211 Natural England has assessed the Council's Appropriate Assessment for this application and advises that the conclusions reached by the Local Authority are that the proposal will **not** have an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats and International sites comprising the Dorset heathlands and Poole Harbour and it is agreed therefore that the Council can proceed to determination of the application.

Dorset Wildlife Trust

Comment Submitted on 14th September 2023

9.212 DWT considered that the ecological information submitted initially was insufficient, such as the lack of follow-up bat trapping surveys, despite the likely presence of rare bat species¹. DWT discussed the proposed mitigation for the Heath Lobelia plant and queries various technical details of how this will be implemented. They argue that "*if changes are detected which could impact Heath Lobelia habitat from any cause, additional minerals extraction which may have the potential to exacerbate this must not be undertaken.*" Further, they question what remedial action would be possible if extraction reduces groundwater levels to the extent that the plant is impacted, as ceasing extraction would not necessarily raise levels back to their

previous level.

- 9.213 DWT strongly supports the draft Hurst Heath Management Plan, particularly the introduction of regular grazing of the area.

In relation to restoration, DWT “*would like to see greater ambition and imagination,*” and conclude that “*Although the large, deep waterbodies proposed and marginal and additional habitats will create value for biodiversity, there is scope to deliver much more diverse and wildlife rich habitats by applying greater variety in the landscape and topography than the current plan shows.*” DWT question the type of grassland at restoration, which appears to be inconsistent across documents.

Network Rail

Comment received on 30/08/23 – Holding Objection.

- 9.214 Network Rail were concerned that the development may change groundwater levels around the railway that serves Moreton Station and could affect the earthworks and embankments. They “*would like to see an assessment of the impacts of the works on the local surface water drainage, including our assets, including information on volume, flow rate and direction.*”

- 9.215 Second comment received 7th June 2024 – following a review of additional documents produced by the hydrogeologists, Network Rail confirms they withdraw the objection and have no further comment to make.

Active Travel England

- 9.216 Submitted on 20/02/24. No Objection.

Sport England

- 9.217 Submitted on 03/08/23, and again on 19/02/24. No Comment.

National Grid

- 9.218 Submitted on 04/08/23, and again on 03/04/24 and 19/02/24. No Objection.

10 Policy

Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The term ‘other material considerations’ is broad in scope, encompassing all matters outside the development plan that should be considered in making a planning decision. Whether consideration is material in any given case depends on the circumstances and should be relevant to planning

and to the making of the planning decision in question. National policies, such as those contained within the NPPF, are material considerations in planning decisions.

Development Plan

10.1 The 'Development Plan' comprises:

- [Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy](#) (adopted May 2014)
- [Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan](#) (adopted December 2019)
- [Purbeck Local Plan](#) (adopted July 2024)

10.2 The most relevant policies from the statutory Development Plans are:

10.3 [Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Strategy](#) 2014

- Policy SS1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy SS2 – Identification of Sites in the Mineral Sites Plan
- Policy CC1 – Preparation of Climate Change Assessments
- Policy AS1 – Provision of Sand and Gravel
- Policy AS2 – Landbank Provision
- Policy RS1 – Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse of Minerals Development
- Policy RS2 – Retention of Plant, Machinery, and other Ancillary Development
- Policy DM1 – Key Criteria for Sustainable Minerals Development
- Policy DM2 – Managing the Impacts on Amenity
- Policy DM3 – Managing the Impact on Surface Water and Ground Water Resources
- Policy DM4 – Protection and Enhancement of Landscape Character and the Countryside
- Policy DM5 – Biodiversity and geological interest
- Policy DM6 – Dorset and East Devon Coast World Heritage Site
- Policy DM7 – Historic Environment
- Policy DM8 – Transport and Minerals Development
- Policy DM10 – Planning Obligations

10.4 [Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and Dorset Mineral Sites Plan](#) 2019

- Policy MS-1: Production of Sand and Gravel
- Allocation AG4: Woodsford Quarry Extension, Woodsford
- Allocation AG5: Station Road, Moreton
- Allocation AG6: Hurst Farm, Moreton

10.5 [Purbeck Local Plan](#) 2024

- Policy E1 – Landscape
- Policy E2 – Historic Environment
- Policy E4 – Assessing Flood Risk
- Policy E7 – Conservation of Protected Sites

- Policy E8 – Dorset Heathlands
- Policy E10 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- Policy E12 – Design
- Policy I2 – Improving Accessibility and Transport

Other Material Considerations

- 10.6 In addition to statutory development plans, there are other policies that are material planning considerations, including the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) and other guidance issued by the national government, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) issued by both Dorset Council and the former Purbeck District Council, and Guidance documents prepared by Dorset Council and the former Purbeck District Council.
- 10.7 SPDs and Guidance of relevance include:
- [Dorset Heathlands Planning Framework 2020 - 2025](#) (Dorset Council)
 - [Nitrogen Reduction in Poole Harbour 2017](#) (Purbeck District Council)
 - [Planning for climate change 2023](#) (Dorset Council)
- 10.8 The NPPF sets out the government's national planning policies and is an important material consideration in decision-making. Below is a list of the most relevant paragraphs, but is not exhaustive:
- Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development: Paragraph 11
 - Decision-Making: Paragraph 38, 47, 54, 55, 56, and 57
 - Building a strong and competitive economy: Paragraphs 85, and 87
 - Promoting healthy and safe communities: Paragraph 104
 - Promoting sustainable transport: Paragraph 115
 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment: Paragraphs 180, 186, 191 (a, b, and c), and 194
 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment: Paragraphs 205 and 208
 - Facilitating the Sustainable Use of Minerals: Paragraphs 215, 217 (d and e), and 219 (h and i)
- 10.9 In addition to adopted development plans, further material considerations that need to be taken into account relate to the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan, that, if adopted, would apply to the area.

The Dorset Council Local Plan is not expected to be adopted until 2027. This Plan will supersede the Purbeck Local Plan when it is eventually adopted. Although it is a material consideration, little weight should be given as it is in draft and has not passed examination or been adopted yet.

11 Public Sector Equalities Duty

11.1 As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

11.2 In considering the merits of this planning application, officers have taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty. It is not considered that there will be any material impact on anyone with protected characteristics. Moreton Station Footpath/bridleway route & the proposed Hurst Lake path will be designed to be accessible by all.

12 Human Rights

12.1 The provisions of the Human Rights Act and principles contained in the Convention of Human Rights have been taken into account in reaching the recommendation contained in this report. The articles and protocols of particular relevance are:

- Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.
- Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.
- The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies and material planning considerations, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third parties.

13 EIA development

This proposal is EIA Development and has been assessed under the terms of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. An Environmental Statement has been submitted as part of the application and any likely significant effects of the development on the local environment have been assessed. This is discussed in Section 15 Planning Assessment.

14 Habitats Regulations

An 'appropriate assessment' of the application was undertaken by Dorset Council as Competent Authority, in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, Article 6 (3) of the Habitats Directive and having due regard to its duties under Section 40(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Appropriate Assessment concluded that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the designated sites.

15 Planning Assessment

15.1 The main issues relating to this application are as follows:

	Whether the development is acceptable in principle
	Impact on the water environment (groundwater, flooding, the River Frome, and Morton stream etc.)
	Impact on landscape
	Impact on trees
	Impact on heritage
	Loss of BMV agricultural land
	Impact on traffic and Highway safety
	Impact on ecology and the environment
	Impact on amenity and the local community
	Restoration, aftercare and after-use
	Conclusion and Planning balance

Principle of Development

Allocations and Landbank

- 15.2 The application site jointly consists of two site allocations in the Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole, and Dorset Minerals Sites Plan (2019): AG6: Hurst Farm; and AG5: Station Road. It was anticipated at the time that both sites would be worked as one connected site, rather than separately. This application proposes that the Hurst Farm site would be worked first (over approximately 10 years) followed by Station Road (also over approximately 10 years). The sites would be connected by an overhead conveyor that would cross the B3390 at a high level. The two allocations were made, according to Policy MS- 1 (Production of Sand and Gravel) of the Minerals Sites Plan, to maintain an adequate and steady supply of sand and gravel.
- 15.3 The Mineral Planning Authority (MPA) is required to plan for the adequate and steady supply of minerals. As paragraph 222 of the NPPF notes, *“it is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy, and goods that the country needs.”*
- 15.4 The NPPF, in paragraph 226, advises that MPAs should maintain a landbank of at least 7 years for sand and gravel, and to maintain separate landbanks for any distinct and separate markets or types of minerals. In this case, that means one landbank for Poole Formation sand and another landbank for River Terrace sand and gravel, with an extra one for both combined. The need to maintain an adequate landbank is also recognised in Policy AS1 of the

Minerals Strategy (2014), which states that “*an adequate and steady supply of locally extracted sand and gravel will be provided by maintaining a landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves equivalent to at last 7 years’ worth of supply...*” A landbank is considered to comprise reserves that have achieved a planning permission for extraction and not reserves simply within allocations.

- 15.5 At the end of 2024, the landbank for River Terrace gravel was 9.35 years, while the landbank for Poole Formation sand was 6.73 years. The combined River Terrace and Poole Formation landbank was 7.68 years. All figures are based on the use of the rolling ten year sales average. Towards the end of August 2025, it was estimated that the landbank for River Terrace sand and gravel had fallen to 8.9 years, while for Poole Formation sand the landbank was estimated to be approximately 6.1 years. The combined landbank was estimated at 7.1 years.
- 15.6 The Mineral Planning Authority is required to maintain landbanks above 7 years for sand and gravel [Paragraph 226 (f)] and unless new sites come forward, the landbank levels will continue to fall. The NPPF Paragraph 226(e) says that Mineral Planning Authorities should use landbanks principally as an indicator of the security of minerals supply, and to indicate the additional provision that needs to be made for new aggregate extraction. It is considered that the substantial quantities of Poole Formation sand that would be available for extraction under this proposal would be particularly helpful in raising the landbank which currently is at a lower level than it should be and thereby providing security of minerals supply.

Context with other mineral sites in Dorset

- 15.7 There are several existing mineral sites in Dorset which produce Poole Formation sands, including: Masters Quarry; Hyde Pit; Binnegar Quarry; Henbury Quarry; and Tatchell’s Quarry. However, not all sands are suitable to be used as building sand, due to their size or shape. Sands obtained from other quarries can be used for other purposes.
- 15.8 Binnegar Quarry in Dorset, also operated by Raymond Brown Quarry Products Ltd (applicants for this planning application) has previously produced a high output of Poole Formation sand over the last 20 years. However, Binnegar Quarry has exhausted its reserves and when final stocks are sold in a few weeks’ time the site will close. The applicant for this application is therefore keen to seek a replacement source to maintain their supply to the market.
- 15.9 In addition to the application site, there are two other allocations in the MSP 2019 for Poole Formation sands. First, AG1: Great Plantation, with an estimated 2 million tonnes of sand and gravel. Second, AG3: Tatchells Quarry extension, with an estimated 330,000 tonnes of sand and gravel. Tatchells Quarry extension was granted planning permission in 2019, but was not lawfully commenced within three years, and therefore the permission

lapsed. Sand from Tatchells is also not suitable for building sand.

- 15.10 There is another type of sand in the Plan area, which is similar to Poole Formation called Bagshot sand. For the purposes of the Plan and of the Local Aggregates Assessment (LAA), Bagshot sand is treated as part of the Poole Formation sand statistics, due to the similarity. There is one allocation in the MSP 2019 for Bagshot sands: AG7 Horton Heath, with an estimated 3.5 million tonnes of Bagshot sand and gravel.

Estimated Reserves

- 15.11 Within the MSP 2019, each allocation was given an “*estimated mineral resource*” figure. Hurst Farm was estimated to have “*approximately 3,300,000 tonnes*” of sand and gravel. Station Road was estimated to have “*approximately 3,100,000 tonnes*” of sand and gravel. The total estimated mineral resource figure for the two sites within the MSP is recorded as 6.4 million tonnes.
- 15.12 The estimate referred to in the MSP of 6.4 million tonnes is significantly lower than the 11.5 million tonnes which is proposed to be extracted in this planning application. In 2015, a trial pit survey was conducted at the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites. This survey was submitted to support the allocation of the sites in the MSP. Later in 2016, the application site was surveyed by 42 boreholes, and a further report submitted. Between the 2015 report and the 2016 report, the estimated figures increased by 30%.
- 15.13 The borehole survey in 2016 still underestimated the depth of the Poole Formation sands, as the boreholes did not go any deeper than 10m, however it has since been found that Poole Formation sand in some areas actually extends to a depth of more than 25m. In 2021, detailed borehole surveys were conducted by the applicant. These sonic boreholes, which went deeper into the Poole Formation sands, are the basis for the revised figures in this application. These surveys found that the Poole Formation sand extends much deeper than previously thought. The increase in the estimated mineral reserve at the application site is therefore solely as a result of an increase in the estimated quantity of the deeper Poole Formation sands, with the River Terrace figure remaining unchanged.
- 15.14 Extraction of 11.5 million tonnes instead of 6.4 million tonnes at the sites is therefore now proposed. Poole Formation sand would be ‘sucked’ out by a floating dredger which would create the lakes forming the final restored landscape. In some areas dredging would go to a depth of 25 metres, and so the proposed lakes would become deeper, although some shallow lake margins would be created as part of restoration to improve biodiversity.
- 15.15 There is no policy requirement for the quantity of sand and gravel to be extracted from the application site to be limited to the estimates in the allocations, but there are benefits to be gained from extracting a greater quantity of aggregate than originally estimated, as for each given area being dug there will be a greater yield, which can mean

less (or delayed) impacts on other areas of Dorset. Therefore, the principle of extraction of 11.5 million tonnes is supported.

Competition

- 15.16 The NPPF, in paragraph 226 (g), advises that MPAs should seek to ensure “*that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition.*” As this proposal will result in a substantial increase in the landbank for sand and gravel, it is appropriate to consider whether there is the potential for a stifling of competition. The application proposes extraction to be at a maximum rate of 600,000 tpa, which would be approximately 48% of the rolling annual 10-year sales average in the plan area between 2015 - 2024 (1,240,000 tpa) or 58% of aggregate sales for 2024 (1,026.488 tonnes). If the same calculation is done for only Poole Formation sand, the market share percentage is similar. Although 44% would clearly be a dominant market share, it is considered unlikely to result in monopoly pricing or to stifle competition.
- 15.17 It is expected that if the operators of the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites were to increase the price of aggregate excessively, then prospective purchasers of the aggregate would look elsewhere for sources of construction aggregate. Alternative options include Hurn Court Farm supplying River Terrace sand and gravel, adjacent to Bournemouth airport, where a planning application for an extension is currently under consideration at BCP Council, and Woodsford quarry adjacent to Hurst Farm. For Poole Formation sand, there are a number of quarries operating along the Puddletown Road. There is also the option of importing crushed rock from Somerset by road to replace gravel, but not sand. These alternative options, (perhaps less so for quarries along the Puddletown Road) would attract higher transport costs as the aggregate is coming from further away, and this could lead to the price of Hurst Farm and Station Road aggregate being higher than it otherwise would be. The availability of an aggregate supply from Woodsford quarry would be expected to act to maintain lower pricing from Hurst Farm and Station Road, as long as Woodsford was supplying aggregate. The operation of the market would be expected to prevent monopoly pricing, and the existence of other supply options which should prevent the stifling of competition in relation to gravels.

Economy

- 15.18 Paragraph 224 of the NPPF states that, when determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy. Once commenced, it is anticipated that the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites will employ around 11 people which is approximately twice the number from the previous mineral extraction site worked by this applicant at their Binnegar site. Binnegar Quarry is closing as mineral reserves are exhausted, and the Applicant would like to re-employ people at the new Hurst Farm quarry if planning permission is granted. There will

also be indirect employment created through the supply chain and the development will play a role in assisting growth of Dorset's economy through the supply of construction materials that will be required for all the expected local future house building. Therefore, this proposal gains great weight in the planning balance in relation to the economy.

Policy MS-1

- 15.19 Policy MS-1 of the Minerals Sites Plan (MSP) 2019 aims to maintain an adequate and steady supply of sand and gravel in the area. The policy lists the allocated sites that would be able to contribute to the adequate and steady supply and the list includes AG5 Station Road, Moreton and AG6, Hurst Farm, Moreton. The policy goes on to say that proposals will be permitted where they meet three criteria, as follows:
- that applications address the Development Guidelines set out for each site in Appendix A of the MSP;
 - that they demonstrate that any adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts, from the development will be mitigated to the satisfaction of the authority; and
 - that proposals demonstrate that possible effects (including those related to hydrology, displacement of recreation, species, proximity, land management and restoration) and that these effects would not adversely affect the integrity of European or Ramsar sites either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This needs to be identified through a Habitats Regulations Appraisal screening and will be a key element in meeting these requirements.
- 15.20 Policy AS-1 of the Dorset Minerals Strategy requires that an adequate and steady supply of locally extracted sand and gravel is provided by maintaining a landbank of permitted sand and gravel reserves equivalent to at least seven years' worth of supply. This requirement is also in the NPPF. Poole Formation sand and river terrace/plateau sand and gravels are geologically different, and it is therefore considered appropriate to monitor their supply separately. These separate land banks are a requirement as laid down in policy AS2 'Land bank provision'. This policy requires at least the equivalent of at least seven years supply in each case.
- 15.21 The current Landbank figures show River Terrace at 9.1 years and Poole Formation sand at 6.3 years. Clearly, Poole Formation sand has currently slipped below the 7 years which Mineral Planning Authorities are required to maintain and therefore this proposal is considered to comply with both national and local policy on this issue.
- 15.22 The **development guidelines** for each allocation include various requirements to be taken into account in relation to each site. A

landscape- scale approach is expected to be adopted, taking into account the existing natural, built, historic and cultural landscape character, along with existing or proposed restoration of minerals sites adjacent to or in the vicinity of the allocation.

15.23 In relation to the Hurst Farm site (AG6) and Station Road site (AG5) these include the following topics:

- Natural Environment -full assessment of ecological impacts, particularly in relation to the SSSI River Frome and Heath Lobelia SNCI
- Hydrology and flood risk
- Transport and access
- Historic/Cultural Environment
- Landscape and visual
- Sensitive receptors – amenity, noise and visual impact
- Cumulative impacts

15.24 The Minerals Site Plan also states that “*Station Road should preferably be worked before Hurst Farm.*” However, the applicant for this application has chosen to work Hurst Farm first followed by Station Road. This is due to designing the plant and processing site location towards the rear of the Hurst Farm site (southwest corner) being the furthest location away from residential properties. The reason this was stated in the Plan as ‘preferably’ is because it was envisaged at the time that the Station Road site would be worked first, during which time it was also thought that the Woodsford Quarry Extension would be worked, then later on Hurst Farm would be worked, aiming to avoid any cumulative effects due to the proximity of the Hurst Farm and Woodsford Quarry Extension sites.

15.25 The development guidelines in the MSP 2019 also state that the eastern area of the Woodsford Quarry Extension (which is separately allocated as AG4) and the western area of Hurst Farm “*should preferably not be worked simultaneously.*” Dorset Council has separately been considering the adjacent planning application for Woodsford Quarry extension (Reference: P/FUL/2023/04753). The Environment Agency is currently maintaining their objection to that application, due to hydrology issues and the Woodsford proposal cannot therefore, at this time, be recommended for approval and is being reported to the same Strategic and Technical Planning Committee. It is not possible to control the timing of extraction (at the sites) to the degree that the two sites would be worked simultaneously or not, although as one may commence extraction some time before the other, it may well be that simultaneous working doesn’t happen anyway.

15.26 Also, a cumulative impact assessment has been submitted with this planning application which concludes that even if both sites were to be worked simultaneously, it is unlikely that any unacceptable impact would occur. The Environment Agency (at the time of writing this report) maintains its objections and concerns regarding the impact on hydrology and the River Frome in relation to the method

of working proposed in the Woodsford Extension application. The development guidelines do refer to the two sites being ‘preferably’ not worked simultaneously, and this could happen anyway due to the potential for a delay in terms of a positive determination for the Woodsford proposal. In conclusion it is considered that the proposal is compliant with this aspect of Policy MS-1.

- 15.27 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity, soils etc. The application site itself does not have any formal designations, except for being Grade 2 and 3 Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, the majority of which would be lost following mineral extraction. The designations do include the nearby SSSI River Frome and Hurst Heath SNCI. Each of these issues and impacts are considered in detail, further on in this assessment.
- 15.28 The application site, covering both site extraction areas, are allocated sites in the MSP, including within the first part of Policy MS-1 of the MSP 2019, as the development would allow for an adequate and steady supply of sand and gravel to be produced from allocated sites. As later sections demonstrate, the proposal also complies with other criteria addressing the development guidelines and demonstrating that adverse impacts, including cumulative impacts associated with the development will be mitigated to an acceptable degree as well as demonstrating that any possible effects, including those relating to hydrology, species, proximity, land management and restoration would not adversely affect the integrity of any European or Ramsar sites. The proposal therefore complies with Policy MS-1 as a whole.

Concrete Plant and Bagging Plant

- 15.29 The application proposes within the plant site area, in the south-west corner of Hurst Farm, to site a concrete plant and a bagging plant. Some representations have argued that these are unnecessary additions and should be removed. However, it is often usual for large sand and gravel sites to have such plants, which allow the operator to offer a wider selection of aggregate to customers. For example, the sand and gravel quarry to the immediate west of the application site, Woodsford Quarry, has both a concrete plant and a bagging plant on their site. The proposed location of the concrete plant and bagging plant is sited well away from any residential properties and there would be no visual intrusion. It is also considered that there would be no further impact in relation to highway movements. Overall, it is therefore considered that there is no objection in principle to the inclusion of these facilities as part of the development.

Water Environment and hydrology

- 15.30 Policy DM3 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) states, in part, that *“Provision should be made to ensure the protection and maintenance of the:*

- a) *Quality;*
- b) *Direction and rate of flow; and*
- c) *Volume of flow of groundwater, watercourses, and all other surface water.*

- 15.31 Policy DM3 also requires that proposals at risk of causing flooding include measures to avoid or mitigate that risk.
- 15.32 The development guidelines for the application site in the MSP (2019) highlights several possible issues in relation to the water environment, including: a nearby groundwater Source Protection Zone to the north-east of Hurst Farm; the nearby River Frome SSSI; and the nearby Moreton Stream.
- 15.33 In relation to Moreton Stream, the development guidelines explain that: *“Although it is recognised that the rate and volume of flow in water courses varies naturally, development of this site must ensure that the preparation, working, and restoration of this site does not cause or result in any overall, long-term or permanent decrease in the rate or volume of flow or deterioration in water quality.”*
- 15.34 The Environment Agency (EA) has made several detailed comments regarding the proposal, the latest of which concludes that there is no objection to the application, subject to conditions and obligations which are summarised in paragraph 15.36.
- 15.35 The EA withdrew their previous objection to the proposal in December 2024 and proposed a number of conditions relating to surface and groundwater at the site, stating that the acceptability of the Hurst Farm/Station Road proposal is dependent on water management and on the relationship between the levels at the site in the adjacent River Frome. They went on to say that the protection of water levels, flows and quality in the River Frome, particularly at low flow, is a very significant issue because of the SSSI status of the chalk stream. The EA considers that the successful operation of the quarry site in this location requires a clear baseline set, on which to establish working and restoration water levels as part of the wet working operation.
- 15.36 The EA, in their most recent letter concludes that the proposals and site- specific information submitted with this planning application gives them sufficient confidence that impacts on the River Frome can be adequately managed through appropriate conditions. The conditions that the EA would like to be added, if permission is granted, would be as follows:
- Interpretive conceptual model update report and monitoring and mitigation plan. The EA would like surface water and groundwater monitoring to be undertaken for a continuous period of 12 months and an interpretive conceptual model update report and monitoring and mitigation plan to be submitted.
 - Scheme of wet working and proposed water levels The EA would like a scheme of wet working and water

level monitoring to be submitted.

- Annual Monitoring Reports The EA would like an annual report to be submitted showing the extent of works over the previous 12 months, observed water levels and flows and compliance/non-compliance issues
- Restoration monitoring and verification The EA would like a revised restoration plan submitted based on the interpretive conceptual model and water level monitoring data to include post restoration monitoring
- Storage of oils, fuels and chemicals The EA would like to have details of any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals submitted

15.37 Subject to the above conditions, the Environment Agency is satisfied that as the mineral to be worked at Hurst Farm is capable of being extracted using wet working techniques, which are not based on the need to dewater strata, that the proposal is acceptable on the basis that the mineral workings and all water uses will be required to maintain water levels above defined river levels.

15.38 Paragraph 182 of the NPPF advises that applications that could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems and these should provide multifunctional benefits wherever possible through facilitating improvements in water quality and biodiversity, as well as benefits for amenity. LLFA also suggest conditions in relation to surface water management and drainage.

15.39 The EA has a wide range of responsibilities in relation to mineral sites, and the operator would be required to apply for, and receive, at least two permits from the Agency. The environmental permitting process is similar but distinct and separate from the planning process. The operator would be required to comply with the conditions of the permit which would be monitored and enforced by the Agency.

15.40 In summary, subject to conditions, the Environment Agency and Dorset Council Flood Risk team are satisfied that the proposed development will be acceptable with suitable conditions imposed if planning permission is granted. As such the proposal is therefore considered to be in compliance with Minerals Strategy 2014 Policy DM3 and national policy.

Landscape

15.41 Policy DM4 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) requires that proposals should include provisions to protect/and/or enhance the quality, character and amenity value of the countryside and landscape. It goes on to say that development which affects the landscape will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that any adverse impacts can be avoided; or, if avoidance is not possible, adequately mitigated; or, if avoidance or mitigation is not possible,

compensatory enhancements are secured to offset the impact.

- 15.42 This mineral extraction planning application covers a large area of what is currently open countryside, and although it is scenic, it has no official local or national designations, although there are nearby ecological designations of SSSI and SNCI. The land forming the two mineral sites on either side of the B3390 is characterised by a flat landscape with mature hedgerows interspersed with trees, some being veteran. If the development is to take place, some of these mature hedgerows will need to be removed.
- 15.43 Paragraph 187 of the NPPF advises that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.
- 15.44 The application was accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which includes proposals for landscaping and planting. After the submission of the LVIA, a Cumulative Impact Assessment was submitted, which included an additional chapter of the LVIA. In total, 15 viewpoints were assessed within the original LVIA, and three viewpoints were assessed as part of the Cumulative LVIA.
- 15.45 The application site, as noted by the Landscape Officer, is “*very representative of the existing landscape character of the Valley Pasture Landscape Character Type and the Mid Frome Valley Pasture Landscape Character Area.*” The application site is currently well-screened by existing hedgerows and tree belts, and the number of public viewpoints into the site are limited with no public access to any part of the site. The Dorset National Landscape (former Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) is situated c.4km to the south, and it is considered that, at that distance, the development would not have any visual impact upon it.
- 15.46 The landscape impact of the proposal can be distinguished between the impacts during the operational phase and the impacts post-restoration.
- 15.47 There are likely to be greater adverse landscape impacts during the operational phase of the development, when machinery (e.g. conveyors and excavators) and the plant site area (e.g. the concrete plant and the processing plant) may be visible, although set back at the rear of the site. The working scheme also incorporates bunding of topsoil and overburden, which would provide some visual screening during operational phases screening the operations and although being visible in themselves, the bunds would be planted and therefore unobtrusive in the landscape.
- 15.48 The Landscape Officer raises some concern over the view into the site from Viewpoint 1, which is located at the entrance to Hurst Farm on the B3390. As there is no pavement or public access currently, and as there is an existing hedgerow, this view would likely only impact drivers and passengers in vehicles and therefore is considered to be of low sensitivity. The Landscape Officer notes however, that

the loss of a tree belt known as G12 (which is located in what would become the main Hurst Lake) would be noticeable from this viewpoint. He agrees that the scheme put forward is however, well-designed and would include an element of screening banking/mounding between the proposed car park and the B3390 main road, together with substantial appropriate native planting. This would be incorporated into a wider landscaping scheme as part of a pre-commencement condition.

- 15.49 Viewpoints 2 ('Dairy Cottage') and Viewpoint 3 ('Hurst Dene Cottage' and 'Hurst Cottage') are from residential properties along the B3390. It is likely that some construction operations on the application site would be partially visible and could have some adverse visual impact upon views from first floor windows. Overall though, this impact is considered to be acceptable and would be mitigated by proposed planting along the eastern boundary of the application site at Hurst Farm, and from screening bunds.
- 15.50 As the application site is proposed to be restored to several large waterbodies, the magnitude of the change in the landscape as a result of the development would clearly be significant. However, the change is not unprecedented locally; there are already a series of waterbodies in the immediate area which are the result of former and historic sand and gravel working. These include Pallington Lakes to the north, and Silverlakes to the west. The allocated Woodsford Quarry extension to the immediate west would similarly involve the creation of a large number of waterbodies, if approved. It was recognised at the time of the allocation of the application site in the MSP (2019), that the change in the landscape as a result of mineral extraction would involve the creation of waterbodies, which is unavoidable in this location due to the high water-table.
- 15.51 The proposed restoration scheme for Hurst Farm and Station Road would involve extensive planting and landscaping, which would aim to ensure the restored quarry would appear less artificial and become part of the landscape. Overall, it is considered that the landscape impact of the restored site, when considered alongside the proposed planting scheme, is likely to be neutral or negligible, and is therefore considered acceptable.
- 15.52 The Cumulative LVIA considered whether the application site and the adjacent proposed Woodsford Quarry extension would both be visible. There are relatively few locations from which both would be visible simultaneously. The most notable is from Bridleway SE4/23, looking south-west from the high ground to the north of the River Frome, and approximately 1.5km from the Hurst Farm site. The view of the Hurst Farm site from this viewpoint is relatively limited, while the view of the possible adjacent Woodsford Quarry extension is more extensive. Overall, the perceived cumulative landscape impact is not considered to be significant.
- 15.53 As the site office / visitor centre is proposed to be retained as a permanent building, along with the associated parking, the Landscape Officer has said that details should be secured through condition for the restored access, internal haul road, and gates. This would ensure

that the retained accesses, roads, and gates would not be too overengineered or be visually intrusive.

- 15.54 Policy DM4 requires that a hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, and compensation is followed. Overall, it is considered that the application has followed this hierarchy and is compliant with Policy DM4. The siting of the plant site area in the south-west corner of the Hurst Farm site would avoid placing the tallest and most visually intrusive structures to the north or east, from where they would be more visible. Where views into the site are unavoidable, it is considered that the impact has been adequately mitigated by proposed planting, bunding, setbacks, and other measures.
- 15.55 In conclusion, it is considered that that both during operations and upon restoration, the application site, subject to sufficient mitigatory landscaping, would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape or visual amenity, and complies with Policy DM4 of the Minerals Strategy 2014.

Trees

- 15.56 Chapter 15 of the NPPF aims to ensure that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside. Para. 193 requires local planning authorities, when determining planning applications, to apply a number of principles, one of which is; if development results in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees) then planning permission should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.
- 15.57 This application would result in the loss of a veteran tree (V174). The tree is located in the centre of the proposed sand and gravel extraction area at Station Road. Once extraction has completed in that area, the restoration plan shows the formation of a large lake. Given the physical size of the lake that would be formed and the position of the veteran tree, the only possible way to save the tree in its current location would be to reduce the amount of mineral extraction in that area. This would result in a substantial loss of sand and gravel from the site, which could otherwise be obtained.
- 15.58 As the Station Road site would contribute 4 million tonnes of Poole Formation sand (and 1.5 million tonnes of River Terrace Gravel) to the land bank, an important material consideration in line with the policies of the Minerals Plan 2014 and the Minerals Sites Plan 2019, and as NPPF Para. 222 states that minerals are a finite resource and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. It is considered in this instance, that on balance, more weight should be given to maximising the amount of mineral accessed in the site area, rather than to the retention of the veteran tree. In concluding this, policy background supporting mineral extraction, where it is found, means that the veteran tree in this instance, cannot be retained as the deep strata

of Poole Formation sand is located around the area where the tree is located and due to the wet working extraction, the land would not be stable enough to support the tree on an island. Therefore, it is considered that there are wholly exceptional reasons in this case to allow the removal of the tree. As such, the applicant has submitted a compensation strategy in order to be compliant with Paragraph 193 (c) of the NPPF.

- 15.59 The submitted Compensation Strategy details the provision of around 1 hectare of new woodland to be planted, rhododendron management on and around the Moreton Estate, together with the translocation of V174 into the new woodland as well as the identification of 50 future on-site veterans. The translocation of the veteran tree is of course not guaranteed to be successful, and it is possible that the tree could die in the process. However, as a veteran tree, even if it died, it would still host a good level of biodiversity and would therefore still contribute to the ecology of the area, even if the translocation process was not successful. It is therefore considered in these circumstances that it should be accepted that the veteran tree should be translocated in order to provide access to the minerals to be extracted.
- 15.60 The new vehicular entrance to the Station Road site would involve the removal of a section of hedgerow and a mature oak. The hedgerow and tree survey looked in detail at the vegetation along the B3390 where the access to the Station Road is needed and the loss of one tree was considered to be the better solution, as moving the access further along would have meant the removal of a group of three trees. Gates would be provided 18m into the site, enabling a low loader to park off the highway before opening the gates. It is intended that this entrance would only be used infrequently, and the loss of the oak tree is unfortunately unavoidable.
- 15.61 With regard to the trees adjacent to the B3390 close to Moreton Station, which are adjacent to the new path route to Moreton village, it has been suggested that the best way of preserving the trees closest to the new pavement would be to use a 'no-dig' solution which should be a requirement in the S106 (as this area is outside of the planning application site). This method of footpath construction has been used successfully in other areas, including in Poole. There is a possibility that as the roots grow over the years the surfacing would require more maintenance or repair sooner than if the pavement was a traditional construction. To accommodate the traditional construction, some trees may have to be felled, whereas using the 'no-dig' solution they could be retained. Dorset Council Highways are of the view that the new footpath should be a traditional construction, whereas Dorset Council Tree Officer is in favour of using the 'no dig' method, thereby allowing retention of the trees. It is considered that from an environmental point of view, it would be better to use the 'no dig' solution and minimise tree damage/loss. This could potentially lead to Dorset Council having to do more maintenance of the pavement, in the future, and pay subsequent maintenance costs, than if it was built with traditional construction methods. On balance, as it is consistent with DM1(b&c), DM2(e), DM4 and DM5 it is considered

better that the trees are not felled and the 'no dig' solution is used.

- 15.62 A number of conditions have been proposed to protect the trees that are to be retained on the application site, as well as the Root Protection Areas of these trees. Overall, it is considered that the application proposal is acceptable from a tree point of view.

Heritage

- 15.63 Policy DM7 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) states, in part, that: *"proposals for mineral development . . . will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated through an authoritative process of assessment and evaluation that heritage assets and their settings will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Adverse impacts should be avoided or mitigated to an acceptable level."*
- 15.64 The Council has a statutory duty under section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to 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"*.
- 15.65 The Council has a statutory duty under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which states that *'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'*.
- 15.66 Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states; *'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss of or less than substantial harm to its significance.'*
- 15.67 Paragraph 213 of the NPPF states that: *'any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, should require clear and convincing justification'*.
- 15.68 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states; *'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'*
- 15.69 There are several listed buildings in close proximity to the application site, and a list is available in paragraph 7.4 of this report. There is also the nearby Moreton Conservation Area, approximately 60m to the north-east of the Station Road site.
- 15.70 The village of Moreton is famously the home of Lawrence of Arabia's grave, located approximately 720m to the east of the eastern end of the Station Road site.
- 15.71 The Conservation Officer, following a site visit, found (with one notable exception) that "a conclusion of no harm is considered appropriate with regard to the scheme's impact on identified

designated heritage assets.” It is considered that this conclusion is supported by the restricted views to and from heritage assets and the site, which would be obscured by hedgerows and trees as well as the proposed soil bunds. With regard to impacts on the non- visual experience of the heritage assets, such as potential impacts from noise and dust, it is considered that the predicted levels of noise and dust outlined in the Noise Assessment and Dust Assessment is such that they would not detract from the appreciation of these assets by visitors or onlookers.

- 15.72 However, the Conservation Officer concluded that “less than substantial harm” would occur as a result of the proposed development, with regard to Hurst (South) Bridge. Hurst Bridge is Grade II listed, constructed in 1834 and spans over the River Frome. The bridge is known as Hurst (South) Bridge was built in 1834 and was designed by Dorset’s County Surveyor, William Evans. It is an 8 span bridge constructed in brick with Portland stone cut edges and footings. It is currently in use on the B3390, and due to its narrowness, vehicles can only cross in one direction at a time. The proposed development would involve an estimated 94 HGVs crossing the bridge each working day (i.e. 47 in one direction and 47 in the other). In particular, the Conservation Officer’s concerns were “*with regard [to] the future structural integrity of Hurst (South) Bridge,*” and that the nature of the predicted impact was “*physical and direct.*”
- 15.73 As a result of the concerns for the structural integrity of the bridge which could be impacted as a direct result of the proposed development, and any wider physical and direct impacts from the HGVs, Dorset Council’s specialist Bridges team within Dorset Highways note that the “*bridge is in sound structural condition,*” and that “*defects noted are age and exposure related deterioration as a result of weathering.*” They are clear in their view that the proposed HGV movements, on top of the considerable numbers of vehicles which use the bridge currently, would not be likely to pose any structural risk to the bridge, or risk accelerating weather-related deterioration. They note that none of the bridges along the three HGV routes in the Traffic Management Plan are weight restricted and conclude that “*there is no reason to limit the number of vehicle movements for structural reasons.*”
- 15.74 The Conservation Officer suggested that the applicant conduct a “*periodic structural investigation and monitoring*” of the bridge. However, the Bridges team at Dorset Council already conduct a regular structural survey of the bridge every two years, and it is therefore considered that additional monitoring is unnecessary. The applicant has submitted their own structural survey of the bridge as part of this application, undertaken by a qualified structural engineer, who found it to be in overall “*good condition*”.
- 15.75 To reduce any potential harm, the Dorset Council Conservation Officer would ideally have liked to see a mitigation strategy to reduce the risks to the heritage asset. It has been suggested that this could take the form of a monetary contribution towards the cost of any substantial repairs to the bridge. The bridge is however part of the

public highway (B3390) under Dorset Council's jurisdiction, and a substantial amount of other traffic also uses the road and travels over the bridge.

- 15.76 NPPF Para 56 states that Local planning authorities should consider whether unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of planning obligations (and conditions). In this case, it is considered that due to the substantial quantity of other traffic using the bridge, it wouldn't be possible to directly attribute any repairs needed specifically to having been caused by the quarry HGVs. Further, Dorset Council's Bridges Team considers that the bridge is structurally sound. Therefore, to require a monetary contribution would not comply with the tests required for planning obligations as laid down in Red 122 of the CIL Regulations or Para 58 of the NPPF (b. directly related to the development, would be hard to prove).
- 15.77 The Conservation Officer considers that there is however, the potential for 'less than substantial harm' to occur to Hurst Bridge from HGV traffic connected with the proposed development.
- 15.78 Para.215 of the NPPF requires that where a proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to a heritage asset, that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this case there would be a number of public benefits that would arise from the development taking place including the provision of vital mineral supply, employment and public access, and in the longer term a visitor centre and lakeside path.
- 15.79 It is agreed that the harm that would occur to the bridge would be 'less than substantial', the scale of which would be towards the lower end of the spectrum. The public benefits that would arise from the development overall would however, be fairly substantial, clearly outweighing the less than substantial harm to the bridge.
- 15.80 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in planning terms as it is consistent with Policy SS1 and Policy DM1(d) of the Minerals Strategy and Section 16 of the NPPF.

Archaeology

- 15.81 In addition to the heritage assets in the vicinity of the application site (e.g. listed structures), there are also undesignated heritage assets underneath the site. As is the case on other mineral sites, there is a high possibility that excavation will result in archaeological discoveries.
- 15.82 Prior to the submission of the application, a desk-based study and a geotechnical survey were conducted. Following consultations with Dorset Council's Archaeologist, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken. In total, 487 trenches were dug across the application site in the summer of 2023. The trenches' lengths ranged from 18m to 32m, in depth from 0.15m to 0.9m, and all were 2m wide. 57 of the trenches contained potential archaeological features.

- 15.83 Some of the artefacts found were dated to the 1st and 2nd Century (ie. Late Iron Age/Early Roman period), including a near complete jar with a diameter of 14cm. Flints and blades were found from the Neolithic/Bronze Age, with a small number possibly from the Mesolithic period. The stem of a 17th Century clay pipe was found.
- 15.84 While the trenches and survey indicated that the majority of the application site was of low archaeological interest, there is notable archaeological interest in the area to the south-east of Hurst Farm. There is even the possibility that it may be the site of a settlement from the Late Iron Age to the Middle Roman period. The County Archaeologist notes that there “*appear to be significant archaeological remains.*”
- 15.85 A condition is recommended to require the submission and approval of a written scheme of investigation, in order to secure a programme of archaeological works. This will involve both on-site fieldwork, and post- excavation work, such as publication of discoveries.

Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land and Soil

- 15.86 Policy DM1 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) recognises the importance of appropriate management of soils and of steering development towards areas of poorer agricultural land quality. It states, in part, that minerals development must address satisfactorily the “*protection of soil resources throughout the life of the development and where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary and there is a choice of location, giving preference to the development of poorer quality land over higher quality or best and most versatile land.*” Policy RS1 similarly states, in part, that soil quality should be protected for use in restoration during “*stripping, storage, and management of soils, subsoils, and overburden arising as a result of site operations.*”
- 15.87 The NPPF similarly highlights the importance of BMV agricultural land, stating in paragraph 170 that the “*economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land*” should be recognised in planning decisions. In relation to the allocation of land for development in a development plan, the NPPF advises in a footnote that:
- Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside the other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development.*”
- 15.88 The application site was allocated in the MSP (2019), and in accordance with the footnote above, alternative sites were considered as part of the plan- making process. It was recognised in the development guidelines for the application site in the MSP

(2019) that *“the land is good quality agricultural land and protection and appropriate management of soils is required to enable the land to retain its longer term capability.”*

- 15.89 The Agricultural Land Classification system divides agricultural land into five grades (Grade 1 ‘Excellent’ to Grade 5 ‘Very Poor’), with Grade 3 subdivided into Subgrade 3a ‘Good’ and Subgrade 3b ‘Moderate’. Grades 1 to 3a are considered to be ‘Best and Most Versatile’ (BMV). Approximately 40% of farmland in England is BMV, and approximately 20% of farmland in England (ie. half of BMV land) is Grade 1 or 2. Within Dorset, approximately 4% of land is Grade 1 or 2.
- 15.90 The application site is currently in agricultural use. An ‘Impact Assessment of Agricultural Land Quality and Soil Resources’ was submitted in support of the application. This concludes that 74% of the application site is Grade 2, and an additional 12% is Grade 3a. Therefore, a total of 85.5% BMV. The proposed development would result in the combined loss of 100ha of Grade 2 land, along with the loss of 16ha of Grade 3a. This loss would be permanent, as the majority of the land would be restored to water bodies. Only a very small amount of land after restoration would likely be able to be used for agricultural purposes, with remainder being lost. This is because of the high water table in this location which means that it is not possible to restore most of the land back to agricultural use as most of the land will be restored to water bodies.
- 15.91 The loss of 116ha of BMV land would be large and significant. However, due to the nature of mineral extraction, which ‘can only be worked where they are found’ (Para. 222 NPPF) such loss in this location is regrettably unavoidable. The Mineral Sites Plan has endorsed the principle of the use of the land changing from agriculture to mineral extraction, in the knowledge that the land would not be able to be restored back to agricultural fields and alternative sites were considered as part of a comprehensive plan examination. Overall, the permanent loss of BMV land is considered to carry moderate weight in the planning balance against the proposal.
- 15.92 In order to ensure that soils are appropriately managed throughout the life of the development, it is recommended that a Soil Resource Strategy is secured through condition, a draft of which has been submitted. This strategy would follow the industry best practice, as outlined in the “Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites” issued by DEFRA, and “Good Practice for Handling Soils in Mineral Workings” issued by the Institute of Quarrying. It is intended that all soils retained on site for the duration of the mineral workings will be placed back on site when the development is complete, although clearly not necessarily where they were taken from due to the final restoration of the land with its water bodies. The proposal complies with Minerals Strategy Policies RS1 and DM1 and is consistent with NPPF para 187 requiring soils be protected.

Traffic and Highways matters

- 15.93 The application site is split into two halves, Hurst Farm and Station Road, to be worked in that order with a conveyor bridge linking them. When designing the proposal, it was considered that the Hurst Farm site had the better area, more suitable for a plant site, being less visible and away from any houses. As such, this then dictated that the Hurst Farm site would be extracted first in terms of phasing. A new HGV access is proposed at the Hurst Farm site, at the point where the existing access is located. The new access would be wider and designed to the necessary standards for HGVs. The B3390 is a straight road in that location so there is good visibility, however the speed limit there is 60mph.
- 15.94 The Station Road site also proposes a new vehicular access onto the B3390, however this access would be for cars and vans only, but not HGVs. The development guidelines in the MSP for the Station Road site states that a new access could be formed directly onto the B3390, however, peak hours should be avoided, and movements may need to be capped with consideration given to the routing particularly to the north due to the constraints at Alfpuddle and Briantspuddle. The guidelines also refer to the National Cycle Network which crosses the B3390, and runs along Station Road, stating that this needs to be taken into account in the transport assessment, along with existing housing and proposed housing in the local area and other mineral sites.
- 15.95 A permissive route, constructed to bridleway standard is proposed to be created as the new route between Moreton Station and Moreton village. This was also a requirement of the MSP development guidelines. This has been designed, taking into account safety for users of the route, directness of the length and convenience for users as well as the need to ensure that no user groups are discriminated against. The route will involve constructing a pedestrian pavement on the northern side of the B3390 for a short section away from Moreton Station in a northern direction, until a point where the route would safely cross over the B3390 so that it can continue along the south side of the B3390 parallel to Station Road towards the crossroads, then east after the crossroads to the south of Station Road towards Moreton village. Halfway along Station Road there would be an exit off the route for those wishing to exit onto the National Cycle Network at Station Road, or, at a later date once mineral extraction has been completed, it would provide access for cyclists and pedestrians to go north along Policeman's Lane towards the entrance to Hurst Farm and the visitor centre and the footpath around Hurst Farm Lake once it is opened to the public.
- 15.96 The proposed permissive route between Moreton Station and Moreton village has been the subject of extensive discussion with the Applicant and the route, as described above is now considered

to be acceptable. It would provide an appropriate, pleasant and safe route for people, allowing an off- road connection between the station and the village. A stage 1 Safety Audit has been undertaken which included the proposed highway agreements works (section 278 works) for construction of a footway along the side of the B3390, and the audit considered all users. The Highway Authority, who are the overseeing authority, agreed the brief with the designer and were

accepting of the audit outcomes. There were no recommendations to change the speed limit. A change in speed limit could only proceed with a Traffic Regulation Order. If the Parish Council wish to pursue this matter, there are mechanisms in place to deal with these requests, outside of the planning process.

- 15.97 The development guidelines also state that it would be preferred if Woodsford Quarry extension is not worked at the same time as Hurst Farm. As the applicant for this Hurst Farm application fully intends to commence works at the earliest possible opportunity, if planning permission is granted, then it is considered likely that Woodsford Quarry extension would be further behind in terms of timeline. Even if Woodsford Quarry extension were to commence whilst Hurst Farm is still active, the Highway Authority considers that there would not be an adverse impact due to cumulative HGV movements in the area.
- 15.98 To the east of Hurst Farm on the B3390, is the Grade II Listed Hurst Bridge. Traffic using the bridge is one-way. The Dorset Council Bridges team have advised that they consider the bridge to be structurally sound, given its age, and that they consider the increase in HGV traffic over the bridge if the proposal is to go ahead, would not adversely affect the structure.
- 15.99 In terms of the numbers of HGVs that the proposal will generate, this has been put forward in the application as being a maximum of 100 loads per day which would generate 200 two-way HGV movements per operational day (07.00 - 18.00 hours). Other trips generated by car/van are likely to total 25 per day. Or 50 two-way movements per day. Although a vehicular entrance into the Station Road site is proposed to be created, this would not be used by HGVs collecting sand and gravel as the extracted minerals from the Station Road site would be pumped over the conveyor bridge to the processing site at Hurst Farm.
- 15.100 Although it is the case that there would be an increase in HGV movements on the local road network, as a result of this proposal, if granted planning permission, Dorset Council Highways have advised that they consider that the increase in traffic can be safely accommodated on the B3390. In addition, as Binnegar Quarry has recently closed, the HGV movements that were generated from there, would effectively be replaced with the Hurst Farm and Station Roads trips. As a result, there would be no further increase in

cumulative impact. In conclusion, the predicted traffic impact from the development is considered to be acceptable and complies with Policy DM2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014).

- 15.101 Policy DM8 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) states that *“Minerals development which could have an adverse impact as a consequence of the traffic generated by it will only be permitted where it is demonstrated, through a Transport Assessment, that:*
- a) a safe access to the proposed site will be provided;*
 - b) there will be no adverse impact on the Strategic, Primary and/or local road network;*
 - c) developers will provide funding for any highway and transport network improvements necessary to mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts....*
 - d) the proposal, where possible, has direct access or suitable links with the Dorset strategic highway network or primary route network.*
- 15.102 Policy DM8 also states that *“Sustainable transportation should be used where possible and practical, including through minimising distance travelled by road and maximising the use of transport means such as rail, water, pipelines, or conveyor belts to transport minerals where practicable and environmentally acceptable.”*
- 15.103 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF advises that *“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*
- 15.104 The development guidelines for the application site in the MSP (2019) advise that *“...[HGV] movements may need to be capped with consideration given to routing...”*, and in relation to highways, that *“cumulative impact, taking into account existing and proposed housing development and other mineral sites, is a key issue to be addressed.”*
- 15.105 However, Highways has no objection to the proposals and a Transport Assessment, two separate Road Safety Audits, a draft Traffic Management Plan, and a Cumulative Impact Assessment have been submitted in support of the application.
- 15.106 Crossways is likely to expand significantly in the future, as new housing developments are proposed to be built. An application for 500 dwellings on land south of Warmwell Road (Reference: WD/D/16/000378) received a resolution from committee to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a S106 agreement, but it is unclear when this will proceed. Land at Redbridge Pit, Moreton was allocated for residential in the recently adopted Purbeck Local Plan (2024) and there is also land allocated at Crossways in the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan.
- 15.107 The cumulative impact of these housing developments, alongside the proposal for this planning application, as well as existing traffic associated with other existing quarries in the area (e.g Woodsford Quarry and Redbridge Quarry), is nonetheless considered to be

acceptable from a highway point of view. It should be noted that Redbridge Quarry is likely to close permanently and the number of HGVs from Woodsford Quarry will remain the same even if the extension is approved at some point. Dorset Council Highways have assessed the cumulative impacts that could arise from the development and consider the proposal to be acceptable in relation to this issue.

15.108 A number of concerns have been raised in representations regarding highway safety and capacity of the local road network in relation to each of the three proposed routes. The main causes of concern are:

- The route north to Bere Regis would involve crossing the narrow Hurst Bridge, which requires vehicles to give way as only one direction can pass through at a time.
- The route south through Crossways involves a level crossing across the main railway line. As the route continues through the village of Crossways, there may be conflict with vehicles parking and reversing outside of the local co-operative supermarket.
- The route south through Crossways and then through Warmwell would involve passing through the narrow bends at the latter village, which are not easily passable by large vehicles.

15.109 It is acknowledged that a substantial number of representations have been received from the public in relation to concerns regarding emissions from HGVs travelling on the local road network and safety concerns.

15.110 However, overall, in examining this issue, Dorset Council Highways consider that the proposed routes are and will be safe and suitable, provided that drivers exercise caution and that the number of HGV movements are capped. A condition limiting the maximum number of HGVs going in and out of the site is proposed. It is considered that the proposal therefore complies with Policy DM8 and would not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe cumulative impact on the road network. In accordance with paragraph 111 of the NPPF, it is therefore considered that there are no highway objections to the proposal.

Local Amenity (Noise, Dust, Vibration, Lighting, Traffic, etc.)

15.111 Policy DM2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) states, in part, that proposals will only be permitted where they demonstrate that: “*any potential adverse impacts associated with the following considerations are avoided and/or adequacy mitigated to an acceptable level:*

- a) *Noise levels;*
- b) *Dust levels;*
- c) *Air emissions;*
- d) *Lighting;*

- e) *Visual and landscape impacts;*
- f) *Vibration levels;*
- g) *Site related traffic impacts; and*
- h) *Stability of the land at and around the site, both above and below ground level."*

- 15.112 Paragraph 191 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should *"ensure that new development is appropriate to its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions, and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development."* It continues to say that decisions *"should mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life..."* and should *"limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity..."*
- 15.113 Paragraph 224 of the NPPF, which applies specifically to minerals applications, advises that mineral planning authorities should *"ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust, and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated, or removed at source, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties."* However, it also states, *"when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction."*
- 15.114 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) for Minerals provides detailed guidance for how to assess minerals application in regard to impacts on amenity and occupiers of nearby properties, including appropriate noise levels.
- 15.115 The development guidelines for the application site in the Minerals Sites Plan (2019) state, in part, that development *"must take into consideration sensitive receptors... particularly the northern parts of the sites [and] must demonstrate how noise and visual impacts will be minimised to a level considered acceptable by the MPA."*
- 15.116 Many of the representations received from the public raised concerns and objections in relation to health matters that could arise, mainly regarding emissions from HGVs and the potential for dust from the quarry workings.
- 15.117 Dorset Council Environmental Health reviewed the application detail and concluded that any air quality impact, that could have a negative effect on local air quality a result of the development, would be negligible and that the proposed quarrying operation would not result in a significant negative effect.
- 15.118 The Applicant submitted an Air Quality Assessment with the application, which considered transport emissions associated with the proposed development. This concluded that the annual mean and one hour mean NO₂ objectives would be forecast to be met at all modelled receptors. The PM₁₀ concentration is also forecast to meet its receptive long and short term Air Quality Objectives by a

good margin at all modelled receptors. The PM2.5 concentration is forecast to meet the new interim target by the end of 2028.

- 15.119 The NPPF, Chapter 8, promotes healthy and safe communities. In Para 96, it promotes social interaction for communities, for example in mixed-use developments and refers to layouts that allow easy pedestrian and cycle connections, whilst ensuring that developments are well designed, safe and accessible with high quality public space. The paragraph goes on to say that developments should enable and support healthy lives and refers to providing safe and accessible green infrastructure.
- 15.120 This planning application, whilst being a mineral development proposal has assessed impact from both HGV traffic and quarrying activities and it has been concluded that there would not be a significant negative effect on the local area as a result.
- 15.121 It is acknowledged however that there is a degree of local concern regarding emissions from HGVs and dust generated in the local area and in way of mitigation (as well as being a requirement of the MSP) the new proposed permissive (in perpetuity) bridleway linking Moreton station and Moreton village is proposed to be constructed and completed within 2 years of the development commencing. This will go some way to provide a local benefit whilst complying with the NPPF promoting social interaction for communities and providing safe and accessible green infrastructure.

Noise

- 15.122 Mineral extraction often generates significant noise, and consideration of the impact of noise from the proposed development on sensitive receptors nearby is necessary.
- 15.123 The PPG on Minerals outlines the following noise limits during normal operations:
- “Mineral planning authorities should aim to establish a noise limit, through a planning condition, at the noise-sensitive property that does not exceed the background noise level (LA90,1h) by more than 10dB(A) during normal working hours (0700-1900). Where it will be difficult not to exceed the background level by more than 10dB(A) without imposing unreasonable burdens on the mineral operator, the limit set should be as near that level as practicable. In any event, the total noise from the operations should not exceed 55dB(A) LAeq, 1h (free field).”*
- 15.124 In other words, there are two separate requirements. First, predicted average noise levels at sensitive receptors (e.g. residential properties) must be below 55dB. Second, predicted average noise levels should not exceed the existing background noise level by more than 10dB, unless doing so would impose an ‘unreasonable burden’ on the operator.
- 15.125 The PPG on Minerals sets different noise limits for temporary operations (defined as up to 8 weeks), such as soil-stripping, and

the construction and removal of bunds. For these activities, an *“increased temporary daytime noise limit of up to 70dB”* should be considered.

- 15.126 The applicant has submitted both Noise Impact Assessment, as well as a Cumulative Noise Impact Assessment which considers the impact alongside the proposed Woodsford Quarry extension. The Council commissioned a review of the assessment by an external qualified expert. Following revisions to the assessment by the applicant, a further external review was commissioned.
- 15.127 The most significant noise from the development is anticipated to be generated during the formation and removal of the soil bunds, which are temporary operations and therefore benefit from higher noise limits. The processing plant, concrete plant, and bagging plant, which all generate noise, have been sited in the furthest possible area from residential properties. While the dredging operations on the formed lakes are anticipated to be relatively quiet, the use of excavators to extract gravel is anticipated to generate more noise.
- 15.128 The consultant commissioned by the Council concluded in their final review that *“it is considered that the points raised in earlier correspondence have been addressed and it is agreed that it has been demonstrated that the site can be worked in the manner described whilst keeping noise levels at the nearest noise sensitive receptors to within environmentally acceptable levels.”*
- 15.129 However, the consultant also notes, *“that the calculated site noise levels in Phases 11a and 12 at New House are still marginally over the recommended background plus 10dB(A) site noise limit.”* There are two residential properties near this receptor, within the woods to the south-west of the Station Road site.
- 15.130 The applicant’s suggested noise limit for the ‘New House’ receptor would be 12dB above existing background levels, which is 2dB above the 10dB advised in the guidance. The consultant advises that *“It is the decision of the local authority as to whether this upper daytime limit is acceptable for a limited period of the development as proposed in the assessment.”*
- 15.131 As the predicted noise levels at the receptor are marginally higher than the 10dB above background noise level that the PPG guidance advises, it must be considered whether there are any reasonable measures the operator can take to reduce the predicted noise level further. The consultant noted that *“the assessment indicates that additional mitigation measures were considered but demonstrated negligible benefit. This is likely to be due to the topography.”* The PPG advises that Minerals Planning Authorities (MPAs) should not impose *‘unreasonable burdens on the mineral operator’*, and that higher limits can be considered.
- 15.132 Therefore, in conclusion, the proposed 12dB noise level limit at ‘New House’ is considered to be acceptable. The predicted noise level at the receptor would only be above the ‘10dB-above-background’ limit for up to 8 weeks, and even then, only marginally

above it. The predicted noise levels in the assessment are assessed under a worst-case scenario, with actual noise levels typically lower than predicted. The operator has amended their phasing in order to condense the period of time in which noise levels would be higher at the receptor. Finally, and most importantly, the existing background noise level at the receptor is exceptionally quiet, and the actual predicted noise level would be substantially lower than the 55dB limit in the PPG guidance considered to be unacceptable. For context, the proposed 45dB limit at New House would still be significantly lower than the proposed 50dB limit at Hurst Cottages, where background noise levels are higher due to the noise from traffic on the B3390.

- 15.133 Overall, the predicted noise impact from the development is considered to be acceptable, and compliant with Policy DM2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014). A condition is recommended to require the submission and approval of a Noise Management Plan, which would include monitoring and complaint procedures.

Vibration

- 15.134 Due to the distances involved, and the type of working proposed, the development would have no risk of perceptible vibration to the nearest residential properties. The predicted vibration impact from the development is considered to be acceptable and compliant with Policy DM2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014).

Dust

- 15.135 A Dust Assessment and draft Dust Management Plan have been submitted with the application. The assessment concludes that the vast majority of receptors are likely to experience no more than negligible effects.
- 15.136 Slight adverse effects are anticipated during site preparation and restoration activities (i.e. soil stripping, formation and dismantling of bunds) at some receptors, which would be short-lived and temporary.
- 15.137 The only moderate adverse effect anticipated is on the Hurst Heath SNCI during site preparation and restoration activities, which would be short-lived and temporary. This SNCI is an area of woodland near Hurst Farm which is home to the rare Heath Lobelia plant. The Tree Officer has also enquired about the impact of dust from the site on retained trees throughout the site. While dust from quarry activities can cause adverse impacts on vegetation and trees, it is unlikely to be significant and the control measures in the proposed Dust Management Plan are considered to be sufficient to mitigate this risk.
- 15.138 The Applicant submitted a Dust Assessment which concluded that the DEFRA projections of PM10 and PM2.5 have shown that activities associated with the proposed development are not likely

to have an adverse impact on particulate matter concentrations. Exceedances of the relevant AQO's are therefore not likely. As it is proposed to work the site wet, without pumped de-watering, together with the fact that there is a high water table in the area (1-2 metres below ground level), it means that minerals extracted will be very damp, or even wet when extracted, thereby resulting in a considerable reduction in risk of dust generation. As such, it is considered that there would be a low risk of airborne dust.

- 15.139 In conclusion, the predicted dust impact from the development is considered to be acceptable, and would be compliant with Policy DM2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014). A condition is recommended to require the submission and approval of a Dust Management Plan.

Lighting

- 15.140 It is important that appropriate lighting is used at the site, at appropriate times, and that lighting is not detrimental to the amenity of nearby residents. A condition is recommended to require that details of lighting across the site be submitted and approved.

Ecology and the Environment

- 15.141 Policy DM5 of Minerals Strategy (2014) states, in part, that proposals for mineral development "*will only be permitted where adverse impacts on biodiversity and/or geodiversity will be:*" avoided; or, if avoidance is not possible, adequately mitigated; or, if avoidance or mitigation is not possible, compensatory enhancements secured to offset the impact.
- 15.142 Policy DM5 also requires that ecological assessments "*have particular regard to the need to protect, maintain and/or enhance sites and species of international and national importance... [and] also consider the potential for existing habitats on the site to be restored to higher quality habitats, during and after mineral working.*"
- 15.143 The NPPF requires that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes or sites of biodiversity value, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and the wider benefits including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland. The guidance also requires that new development is prevented from contributing to or being put an unacceptable risk from or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution. Where possible development should help to improve local environmental conditions.
- 15.144 Para 193 of the NPPF requires that when determining planning applications, whether proposals are for development on land within or outside a site of special scientific interest which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with

other developments) should not normally be permitted unless the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site any broader impacts on the national network of SSSI's.

- 15.145 Paragraph 193c of the NPPF goes on to say that development which would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists. Opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around the development should be within the site and integrated as part of its design and enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.
- 15.146 Concern has been expressed regarding the proposed removal of veteran tree 174 located within the site. The application states that the veteran tree would need to be removed as it is in a central position where mineral is to be extracted. The issue has been the subject of extensive discussion with the Applicant to understand if there could be a solution that would retain the tree. Unfortunately, the quantity of gravel and Poole Formation Sand that would be lost if the proposed extraction area were to be redesigned, would be significant. Therefore, it has been concluded that the veteran tree 174 would have to be relocated. The Natural Environment Team are aware of this issue and advise that every effort should be made to ensure the survival of the tree, however, in the event that the tree does not survive translocation then the tree should be retained as standing deadwood. Compensatory measures that have been agreed with the Applicant are management of invasive rhododendron in adjacent woodland; identification of individual trees in retained hedgerows and treelines to be future veterans and management of those; creation of new areas of naturalistic woodland planting designed to restore ecological function and contribute to a rich mosaic of habitats in the landscape.
- 15.147 The Council's Natural Environment Team also advises that although this application is not subject to statutory BNG having been registered prior to the enactment of this policy, the environmental management plan and the biodiversity game plan both proposed the potential future marketing of surplus biodiversity units on the site where measurable BNG exceeds the statutory requirement of 10%.
- 15.148 In addition, a rare plant called Heath Lobelia (a species of principal importance in England & Wales under the NERC Act 2006 and is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species) has its habitat close to the site, and ensuring its survival and the long term management and improvement of this rare species is of the highest priority. The applicant has committed to a long term management plan for the Hurst Heath area which would be secured through the Section 106 legal agreement. The Species Recovery Trust has a crucial role in assisting with understanding the needs of this complex plant and

informing the actions within the final management plan it is therefore recommended that the Trust continues to be involved throughout in the future. Translocation through seed collection and disposal of the Heath Lobelia plant to other areas of the site should be seriously considered as part of the management plan. It is known that there is a possibility that nearby mineral working may lower the water table at the Hurst Heath which would be to the detriment of the Heath Lobelia plants. Phasing will ensure the closest part of the proposed extraction at Hurst Farm (phase 6C) will be delayed until after Station Road has been fully extracted. A condition, supported by pre-commencement monitoring of water levels around Phase 6C area, will ensure extraction of 6C will only occur if the Environment Agency confirms to the MPA that they are satisfied that there will be no adverse effect due to water levels on the Heath Lobelia.

- 15.149 Natural England noted (in their comment on the Woodsford Quarry Extension application dated 11/03/2025) that this Hurst Farm application includes plans to manage Hurst Heath for heath lobelia and secure the expansion of its population, as well as to benefit other ecological interests, whereas the evidence from the Woodsford extension application provides little certainty that the groundwater levels fundamental to the species survival would not be compromised as the existing population is only c.120m away from that application boundary and is also close to the locations where expansion of the plant is planned.
- 15.150 Natural England originally objected to this application in January 2024, and at that stage stated that they understood and supported the detailed concerns of the Environment Agency, particularly with regard to river flow of the River Frome. Natural England were of the opinion that the Hurst Farm and Station Road sites could offer opportunities for substantial biodiversity gains both off and on site. NE considered that the potential gains would be both partly from restoration and partly from the management of Hurst Heath. Since then, the Applicant has agreed to provide a Management Plan for Hurst Heath, which would be secured through the S106 Agreement.
- 15.151 The restoration of both Hurst Farm and Station Road was considered by NE to be lacking in terms of quantity of reed and wetland habitat. NE also hoped that a proportion of the river could be diverted to become a large wetland in order to have a more positive effect on river nitrogen concentrations. NE also asked that the restoration plan be revised to show more shallow wetlands. The updated restoration plan for Hurst Farm now shows more shallow wetland areas proposed, although it has not been possible to divert the River Frome due to land ownership issues.
- 15.152 The Environment Agency withdrew their previous objection to the proposal in December 2024 and proposed a number of conditions

relating to surface and groundwater at the site, stating that they now consider the acceptability of the Hurst Farm/Station Road proposal is dependent on appropriate water management and on the relationship between the levels at the site in the adjacent River Frome. They went on to say that the protection of water levels, flows and quality in the River Frome, particularly at low flow, is a very significant issue because of the SSSI status of the chalk stream. The EA considers that the successful operation of the quarry site in this location requires a clear baseline set on which to establish working and restoration water levels as part of the wet working operation.

- 15.153 Both Natural England and Dorset Council Natural Environment Team are now satisfied with the proposals. As such it is considered that with appropriate conditions applied, there is no objection to the application from an ecology perspective and that the restoration of the land to the proposed water bodies will encourage new species into the area that are limited currently. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with NPPF paragraph 187 and 188 and Minerals Strategy policies DM1, DM3 and DM4.

Restoration, Aftercare and Afteruse

- 15.154 Policy RS1 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) has a list of detailed requirements that proposals must demonstrate to be permitted, with the overall aim that they should “*demonstrate a high quality and appropriate restoration scheme*” with “*an appropriate after-use and the long-term maintenance and enhancement of the environment.*”
- 15.155 In particular, Policy RS1 requires that “*the restoration scheme will maximise the potential for the site for the successful adoption of the proposed after-use and where necessary offer flexibility for a range of potential after-use*”; that “*restoration will be undertaken at the earliest opportunity...*”; that “*the aftercare scheme incorporates an aftercare period of at least five years...*”; that “*the after-use will be compatible with the wider context of the site*”; and that “*where opportunities arise the after-use provides benefits to the local and wider community which may include enhanced biodiversity...enhanced landscape character... improved public access, employment, tourism...*”
- 15.156 Policy RS3 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) encourages the “*the establishment of local liaison groups to run for the lifetime of any extraction site...*” The applicant has agreed, as part of a Section 106 Legal Agreement, to create and host such a regular liaison group, as the applicants currently do at their existing site in Dorset.
- 15.157 Policy RS2 of the Minerals Strategy (2014) states that the “*retention of plant, machinery and any other ancillary development associated with any minerals development/operation will not extend beyond the life of the development... except where it can be demonstrated that...there is an identified need for the continued use...*” and retention would not affect restoration of the wider site

- 15.158 The MSP contains paragraphs for both Hurst Farm and Station Road stating that the sites are within the Valley Pasture Landscape Type of the Frome Valley, *“a predominantly flat landform creating a multi-functional landscape where recreation and amenity are just as important as agriculture, enhanced nature conservation value and flood water management”*.
- 15.159 The restoration vision goes on to say that post mineral working it is important to create a multifunctional green infrastructure for the area, linking adjacent areas of population. And that the main aims are to protect the positive landscape attributes of the landscape and improve landscape condition and overall resilience to climate change.
- 15.160 The NPPF in Para.224 (e) requires that, when determining planning applications, that restoration and after care should be provided for at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. In order to maximise the biodiversity of the site, the applicant has agreed to an extended after care period of 30 years.
- 15.161 The Minerals Strategy encourages the green infrastructure network to be strengthened and improved and, where opportunities arise the after-use should provide benefits to the local and wider community, which may include enhancements of biodiversity, enhanced landscape character, together with improved public access, employment, tourism and provision of climate mitigation measures.
- 15.162 The proposed mineral extraction at Hurst Farm and Station Road, subject of this planning application, is likely to take approximately 20 years. During that time, there will be significant changes to the local landscape, and HGV movements in the local area will continue. However, this planning application has been improved during the course of its assessment and now proposes a safe route between Moreton Station and Moreton village, with an added exit/entrance onto/off Station Road to provide further links to the National Cycle Network and eventual safe access to the Hurst Farm Visitor Centre from Moreton Station for visitors on foot or bicycle, which would open after mineral extraction has completed.
- 15.163 Substantial planting is proposed to replace the lost trees and hedges, some of which has already been planted as ‘advance planting’. The Visitor Centre on the Hurst Farm site would be accommodated in the Raymond Brown site office, a permanently constructed building, once they have vacated the site at the end of extraction. The Visitor Centre would have space for exhibitions and rooms for students attending to learn about the local ecology and landscape history. The new biodiversity is expected to be primarily water based, attracting a variety of birds. A walking route is proposed to be implemented around the new Hurst Farm Lake which will be of interest to all and would contain a boardwalk section and bird hides. The Visitor Centre and walking route around the lake would be under the control of the Moreton Estate (land owners) and would remain open for public access, to be controlled through the

S106 agreement.

- 15.164 The Station Road site would be restored to waterbodies and agriculture, and the permissive bridleway route which would link Moreton village with Moreton Station would stay in perpetuity. The conveyor bridge would be removed.
- 15.165 Overall, the proposal is considered to provide a number of lasting features that would benefit the local community in years to come along with also having the potential to add to the attractiveness of the area for tourists, whilst contributing to the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy. The visitor centre is intended to be open to the public as well as school, and youth groups who may wish to learn more about the biodiversity of the site. The public will be able to attend the visitor centre and go for walks around the Hurst Farm Lake. The Visitor Centre would remain in the ownership of the landowner, the Moreton Estate. It is intended that visitors arriving on foot or bicycle would pay no entrance fee and would be able to use the permissive route from Moreton Station to the junction of Station Road and Policemans Lane, with safe walking or cycling along the lane towards Hurst Farm via The Common. It is proposed that car parking charges would apply, with the income generated being used for the maintenance and repair of the Visitor Centre, footpath and lake at Hurst Farm. This would be controlled by a S106 obligation. It is considered that these proposals would benefit the local community once the mineral extraction is complete. This accords with Policy RS1 of the Minerals Strategy where the proposal aims to maximise the potential of the site for a successful after-use, creating areas for habitat to flourish and providing benefits to the local and wider community, linking site restoration to green infrastructure and improving public access and employment.
- 15.166 The site office building proposed near the front of the Hurst Farm site would be constructed at the start of the development and used as a Visitor Centre once mineral extraction has ceased and the site is restored and open to the public. It is unusual for a minerals site office to be of permanent construction and Policy RS1 requires that minerals sites have a restoration scheme that maximises the potential for the site for the successful adoption of the proposed after-use. In this instance, although unusual, the new proposed use of the permanently constructed site office would be compliant with Policy RS1 as its use as a Visitor Centre will allow for the successful after-use of the site. It would also comply with Policy RS2, which in most cases, aims to ensure the removal of plant, machinery and other ancillary development but in this case the retention of the site office building (to be used as a visitor centre) has an identified future use which does not affect the restoration of the wider site and there would be no adverse impacts that would arise.
- 15.151 The Station Road site also has a 'spare' piece of land adjacent to the B3390 which the applicant has suggested might be used for a scheme of solar panels in the future, or the piece of land could have the potential for community use in the future given that it would be accessible via the new permissive bridleway, however no firm

proposals have been put forward for this land at the current time and therefore any proposals are just suggestions and can therefore carry no weight in the determination of this application.

16.0 Conclusion and Planning Balance

- 16.1 Paragraph 222 of the NPPF states that since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation. This proposal is located in an area of Dorset that has reserves of river terrace gravel and Poole formation sand, which are important minerals for the building industry. As house building is predicted to increase, looking ahead, the supply of suitable mineral becomes more and more important. The site is also an allocated site in the Minerals Sites Plan 2019.
- 16.2 The principle of sand and gravel extraction is therefore considered acceptable in this location. Para. 224 of the NPPF states that when determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the predicted expansion of house building looking ahead. The NPPF also states that mineral planning authorities should provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside protected areas (e.g. National Landscapes), which this proposal complies with.
- 16.3 The NPPF also requires that proposals need to ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment and human health, as well as taking into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality. Although the local area has been known historically for sand and gravel extraction, and will continue to be known looking ahead, the sites of Hurst Farm and Station Road can be extracted whilst providing improvements to ecology in the area, and although there will be some adverse impacts, these, it is considered, have been adequately mitigated. This site is situated well away from residential properties and the method of wet working and pumping should ensure that there would be no significant adverse impacts on sensitive receptors through noise or dust.
- 16.4 It is accepted that there will be some adverse impact from the development, over the years of its operation, this being primarily impact from HGVs using the local road network. However, Dorset Council Highways are satisfied that the local roads have suitable capacity for the HGVs.
- 16.5 The NPPF also requires that sites for mineral extraction should be restored and placed in aftercare at the earliest opportunity, and this proposal is anticipated to last around 20 years in total, after which both parts of the application site will be restored, thereafter entering aftercare for a length of 30 years in total to ensure that best results are achieved.
- 16.6 If this proposed mineral extraction goes ahead, it is considered that

the following benefits post mineral extraction would arise:

- the long-term restoration and aftercare of both areas designed to a high environmental standard,
- the Hurst Farm site opening a visitor centre open to the public, together with a footpath and boardwalk around the lake to provide a community benefit for locals and tourists, with an emphasis on the ecology that the newly formed lake will attract.
- a new permissive bridleway made available within 2 years of commencement of development to link Moreton Station and Moreton village, thereby improving sustainability and local community cohesiveness.
- Biodiversity Net Gain of 192% compared to the mandatory 10%

16.7 It is acknowledged that during the course of the mineral extraction that there would be some impact on the local area, however with the conditions proposed and the obligations put forward in the S106 Agreement it is considered overall, that the proposal would be made acceptable and would accord with the Development Plan as a whole.

16.8 The proposal would also be in accordance with NPPF Paragraph.226 as the mineral extraction that would take place would maintain the Dorset Landbank at a level higher than 7 years, ensuring that sufficient mineral supply will be available in the area for a number of years ahead. There are no material considerations which indicate that the permission should nevertheless be refused. Overall, taking all material considerations into account, in the planning balance, it is considered that this application, subject to conditions and a S106, should be approved.

16.9 Recommendation

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions and the completion of a legal agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in a form to be agreed by the legal services manager to secure the following:

S106 Heads of Terms

The S106 Agreement will require the following:

- Compliance with agreed HGV routes for access and egress of all HGVs along one of three routes:
 - 1) Bere Regis route;

- 2) Dorchester route [Western] or,
- 3) Warmwell route [Southern]

- The establishment and operation of a Local Liaison Panel until completion and restoration of the works
- To construct a pavement alongside the B3390 close to Moreton Station with suitable pedestrian crossing over the B3390 to link to the permissive bridleway to Moreton village and make available for use by the public within 2 years of commencement of development.
- To construct a permissive bridleway between the B3390 and Station Road close to Moreton village and to make available for use by the public within 2 years of commencement of development, in perpetuity.
- To enter into a S278 Agreement within 2 years of commencement of development to construct a pavement on the north side of the B3390 close to Moreton Station, and associated pedestrian crossing over the B3390, linking to the bridleway on the south side.
- To submit to the Council for approval (prior to the main extraction of mineral commencing) a Hydrological & Hydrogeological Monitoring and Mitigation Scheme (HHMMS) and to undertake and comply with the details therein.
- To submit to the Council for approval, a Hurst Heath Management Plan and a Rhododendron Management Plan within 12 months of the grant of planning permission. To implement the approved plans and to employ an Ecologist to carry out annual monitoring and periodic reviews.
- To submit to the Council for approval, a Protection of Heath Lobelia Habitat Scheme and working shall proceed in accordance with the approved plan. In the event that working of Phase 6C cannot go ahead without causing unacceptable change in groundwater level at Hurst Heath Wood, a revised restoration scheme restoring that land to nature conservation use and a revised footpath route, shall be submitted to the Council for approval and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan.
- To submit details of a permissive footpath to be created around the lake at Hurst Farm and to be constructed in accordance with the approved details. Following completion of the restoration of the site the footpath shall be made available for public access on a date agreed with the Council. To enforce a prohibition of the use of the footpath by dogs and any other pets likely to be detrimental to wildlife. The path shall be made available to the public to be able to be used in perpetuity.
- To agree to use the building at Hurst Farm (previously used as the site office)

as a Visitor Centre, to be made available and open to the public, in perpetuity, and to be opened at the same time that the Hurst Farm footpath is made available, upon final restoration of the Hurst Farm site.

Afteruse obligations

- Not to use the Hurst Farm land, the Visitor Centre or the car park for any purpose other than nature conservation, agricultural use and informal recreation uses*.
- Not to use the station road land for any purpose other than nature conservation and agriculture.
- To make the car park available to the public between the hours of 08:00 and 22:00 seven days a week.
- To allow public parking charges for the car park. Charges to be approved with the Council annually based upon comparative visitor sites in Dorset (and subject to the points below).
- To use the revenue generated by the parking charges to cover the expenditure costs related to the provision and maintenance of public access to the Hurst farm site.
- To use any unspent revenue to reduce the car park charges annually.
- To keep an accurate account of the revenue obtained from the car park charges and expenditure.
- To provide copies of the records upon request by the Council

*Informal recreation uses by the public shall be limited to walking, bird watching and education in connection with the Visitor Centre.

CONDITIONS

1. Time Limit

The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason

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

2. Plans List – Approved

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Existing Site Plans

Location Plan	HF/523/07
Application Boundary	HF/523/23A
Existing Site	HF/523/19D
Existing Cross-Section A-E	HF/523/24-1A
Existing Cross Section F-I	HF/523/24-2A
Existing Cross Section K-N	HF/523/24-3
<u>Quarry Working Plans</u>	
Proposed Site Phasing Plan	DR-0001 S5-P1.
Stage1	HF/523/15-1C
Stage 2	HF/523/15-2B
Stage 3	HF/523/15-3B
Stage 4A	HF/523/15-4B
Stage 4B	HF/523/15-5C
Stage 5	HF/523/15-6D
Stage 6A	HF/523/15-7C
Stage 6B	HF/523/15-8C
Stage 7	HF/523/15-9A
Stage 8A	HF/523/15-10A
Stage 8B/8C	HF/523/15-11A
Stage 9	HF/523/15-12A
Stage 10	HF/523/15-13A
Stage 11A & Stage 11B	HF/523/15-14C
Stage 11C & Stage 11D	HF/523/15-15C
Stage 12	HF/523/15-16C
Stage 13	HF/523/15-17
Proposed Extraction Cross-Sections A-E	HF/523/26-1A
Proposed Extraction Cross-Sections F-I	HF/523/26-2A
Proposed Extraction Cross-Sections K-N	HF/523/26-3
Storage Pond Sections O-O & P-P	HF/523/36
Proposed Conveyor Crossing Layout	HF/523/11C
Proposed Conveyor Bridge Details	HF/523/30-1
Proposed Conveyor Bridge Montage	HF/523/22
Proposed Permissive Path	HF/523/20G
Proposed Pre-Planting Scheme	HF/523/31
Northern Planting Belt: Planting Plan	
Proposed Rhododendron Management Areas	
<u>Infrastructure Plans</u>	
Proposed Hurst Farm Frontage	HF/523/10D
Proposed Station Road Frontage	HF/523/33D
Proposed Office Building Floorplan	HF/523/SD210A
Proposed Office Building Elevations	HF/523/SD240A
Proposed Office Building Roof Plan	HF/523/SD211A
Proposed Plant Site Area Layout	HF/523/17-1C

Proposed Aggregate Processing Plant Layout	PL/RB251011-
D01 Proposed Aggregate Processing Plant Elevations	PL/RB251022-
D02 Proposed Portable Cabin Detail	HF/523/30-2
Proposed Workshop Detail	HF/523/30-3
Proposed Bagging Plant Elevations	HF/523/17-2A
Proposed Concrete Plant Elevations	HF/523/17-3
Proposed Wheel wash	WW Eco wash Extra Spec Sheet WW V2.0
Footpath and Crossing Design	174.0006-0015 P01

Restoration Plans

Proposed Restoration Scheme (combined)	HF/523/37
Proposed Restoration Scheme Hurst Farm	HF/523
/16-1J Proposed Restoration Scheme Station Road	HF/523
/16-2G Proposed Restoration Cross-Section Hurst Farm A-E	
HF/523/28-1B Proposed Restoration Cross-Section Hurst Farm F-I	HF/523/28-2B
Proposed Restoration Cross-Section Hurst Farm K-N	HF/523/28-3A
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 4A	HF/523/35-1
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 4B	HF/523/35-2
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 5	HF/523/35-3
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 6A	HF/523/35-4
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 6B	HF/523/35-5
Working Scheme with Phased Restoration Stage 13	HF/523/35-6

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Notification of Commencement of Development

Notice must be provided to the Mineral Planning Authority of the date of the commencement of development. This notice must be provided in writing by the operator within seven days of the date of commencement.

Reason

To ensure an accurate record for monitoring of conditions relating to the date of the commencement of development and in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

4. Notification of Commencement of Phases

Within 5 working days of the commencement of each phase of the development, written notice shall be given to the Mineral Planning Authority of the date of the commencement of each phase of the development.

Reason

To assist with the monitoring of other planning conditions which explicitly refer to the commencement of individual phases of the development and in accordance with Policies DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

5. Time Limit – Cessation of Mineral Extraction and Completion of Restoration

The extraction of minerals hereby permitted shall be for a limited period and shall cease by whichever date is the earliest of the following:

- a) Twenty-one years following the date of the commencement of development;
- b) 31 December 2048

Restoration shall be completed within 25 years from the date of commencement.

Reason

To ensure the development and associated impacts are temporary and that the site is restored in a timely manner and in accordance with Policies DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

6. Hours of Working

No extraction or processing of minerals or loading of lorries shall take place except between the hours of 7.00am and 6:00pm Mondays to Fridays and 7:00am to 1:00pm on Saturdays. No working shall take place on Sundays or public holidays.

No operations shall take place outside these hours except for maintenance and the operation of other equipment to maintain the safe operation of the quarry.

Reason

To protect the amenities of local residents and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

7. Alterations to Site Office to form Visitor Centre

Details of any proposed alterations to take place internally or externally (including signage) prior to the new use of the site office building as a Visitor Centre shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority for approval within 1 month of the building ceasing to be used in connection with the extraction of sand and gravel.

Reason To protect the amenity of the area in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

8. Withdrawal of Permitted Development Rights for Site Office/Visitor Centre Building

Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending those Orders with or without modification), no enlargement shall be carried out to the Visitor Centre building hereby permitted, nor the erection of any building ancillary to the Visitor Centre, without express planning consent from the Mineral Planning Authority being first obtained.

Reason

Having regard to the size of the building, and the surrounding landscape, the Mineral Planning Authority wishes to retain control over any future extension of the building in the interests of amenity and proper planning and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

9. Storage of Oils, Fuels and Chemicals

Prior to the extraction of minerals from within the development hereby permitted, details of any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals associated with this development shall be submitted to and approved by the Mineral Planning Authority. The details shall include:

- secondary containment that is impermeable to both the fuel oil, chemical and water, with no opening used to drain the system
- a minimum volume of secondary containment at least equivalent to the capacity of the tank plus 10% or, if there is more than one tank in the secondary containment tank plus 10% or 25% of the total tank capacity, whichever is greatest
- all fill points, vents, gauges and sight gauges located within the secondary containment
- associated above ground pipework having no mechanical joints, except at inspection hatches and have either leak detection equipment installed or regular leak checks
- all fill points and tank vent pipe outlets designed to discharge downwards into the bund

The scheme shall be implemented as

approved.

Reason

To avoid any contamination of the water environment and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

10. Materials for external elevations of site office/visitor centre

Prior to commencement of development details of the materials to be used in the construction of the weighbridge/site offices and visitor centre building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The details shall be implemented as approved.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

11. Limit on Importation of Mineral

No more than 65,000 tonnes of aggregate shall be imported into the site each year. All other aggregate stored, exported, or sold from the development hereby approved shall be extracted or originate from the site. No restrictions apply to the importation or export of cement or concrete. Records of imported aggregate shall be kept and made available on request of the Mineral Planning Authority. All such records shall be kept for at least two years.

Reason

To ensure that the development hereby approved is primarily for the extraction of aggregate from the site, and that the quantity of supplementary aggregate imported for mixing and sale is controlled and in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

ARBORICUTRURAL

12. Veteran Trees

Prior to commencement of development, a Veteran Tree Management Plan shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority for approval in writing. The Plan shall identify oaks and other native trees, in retained treelines and hedgerows, that can be identified as future veteran trees. Further trees should be identified that can be subjected to a veteranisation technique including features suitable for bat roosting. The Plan shall include the following:

- Detailed survey of all veteran trees on site

- Methodology and aftercare for translocating V174 with specialist input/supervision and detailed timeline
- Methodology for planting new area of woodland around V174
- Future management of land surrounding veteran trees and future identified veterans to prevent overcrowding from new planting/compaction from site users
- Scope of any tree works to current or future on-site veterans
- Details of enhancing the condition of all future veteran trees.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plans.

Reason

In the interests of protection of local ecology and protection of veteran trees and in accordance with Policies RS1, DM1, DM4 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

13. Arboricultural Method Statement

Prior to commencement of development an Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by an arboricultural consultant holding a nationally recognised arboricultural qualification shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall provide for:

- Arboricultural supervision;
- Written site management protocols and procedures;
- Erection and maintenance of tree protection measures in accordance with BS5837:2012.
- Accidental damage and treatment;
- Facilitation pruning and access into the site.

The development, and all operations with the potential to impact any trees, shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme throughout the life of the development.

Reason

To ensure the health and vitality of retained trees across the site, which have the potential to be impacted from mineral operations and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

14. Translocation of Veteran Tree 174

Details of the location identified for the translocation of veteran tree 174, together with a methodology and timeline for the translocation shall be submitted to and approved by the Mineral Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any development on the Station Road site. The tree shall be translocated in accordance with the approved details. In the event that the tree does not survive translocation, it shall be retained as standing deadwood.

Reason

To ensure appropriate translocation of a veteran tree and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014)

15. Retention of Vegetation, Hedgerows and Trees

No hedgerows or trees within the application site shall be removed or felled for the duration of the development hereby permitted, except for those approved for removal or felling within one or more of the following approved documents:

- a) the approved Tree Protection Plans;
- b) the approved Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan;
- c) the approved Phasing Plans; and any approved Landscaping Scheme.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

ENVIRONMENT

16. Lighting Strategy

Prior to commencement of development a Lighting Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall aim to avoid harm to protected species and to amenity through minimising light spill and glare. Details of lighting, installation, maintenance, and use must be provided. There shall be no lighting of the site other than in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

In the interests of biodiversity, amenity, and the character of the area and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2, DM4 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

17. Noise Monitoring

Prior to commencement of development a Noise Management Plan shall

be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This Plan shall provide for mitigation measures, noise monitoring protocols, and complaint procedures.

These shall detail how noise measurements are taken in the event of a complaint which is deemed credible by the Mineral Planning Authority, and the steps to be taken if noise exceeds the permitted limits, including the suspension of operations. Mitigation measures within the Plan shall include, where possible:

- Modern reversing alarm technology, such as smart white sound reverse alarms or radar activated alarms;
- Routing design to ensure that vehicles avoid unnecessary reversing;
- Regular maintenance and greasing of equipment, such as bearings;
- Use of electric power instead of diesel generators for machinery;
- Acoustic barriers and insulation.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason

To ensure that noise levels generated by mineral operations are controlled to an acceptable level, and do not adversely impact the amenity of nearby receptors and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

18. Noise Limit – Temporary

Noise from the development hereby approved, during temporary operations shall not exceed 70 dB (LAeq, 1 hour) at any noise sensitive receptor. Temporary operations include soil stripping, bund formation, bund removal, and final restoration. Temporary operations in the vicinity of a receptor shall not exceed a total of eight weeks in any calendar year.

Reason

In the interests of the amenity of nearby residents and visitors and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

19. Noise Limit – Operational

Noise from the development hereby approved, during normal operations (i.e. all operations except for temporary operations), shall not exceed the following levels (LAeq, 1 hour) at the following receptors:

- Sculptures by the Lakes: 49 dB
- Hurst Cottages: 50 dB
- East Cottages: 45dB
- New House: 45 dB

- Cuckoos Mead: 39 dB

The locations of these receptors are as in the Noise Impact Assessment by 24 Acoustics, dated April 4th 2024. Measurements at receptors should be taken at the closest accessible points to the curtilages of the sensitive receptors.

Reason

In the interests of the amenity of nearby residents and visitors and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

20. Dust Control

Prior to commencement of development a Dust Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This Plan shall be based on the draft Dust Management Plan, dated April 2024, submitted as part of the application. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan.

Reason

To ensure that dust levels generated by mineral operations are controlled to an acceptable level, and do not adversely impact the amenity of nearby receptors and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

21. Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

Prior to commencement of development, a Construction Environmental Management Plan, incorporating pollution prevention measures and a timetable, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Mineral Planning Authority. The plan shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details and the agreed timetable for the duration of the life of the development.

Reason

To prevent pollution of the water environment and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

22. Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan (EMMP)

Prior to commencement of development an Ecological Mitigation and Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall be based on the draft EMMP, date 7 July 2023, submitted as part of the application. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To secure ecological mitigation and long-term biodiversity benefits and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

23. Archaeology

Prior to commencement of development a written scheme of archaeological investigation shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall cover archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation work, and the publication of the results. The programme of archaeological work must be implemented and completed in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To ensure the protection, recording, and publication of potential archaeological discoveries during the course of the development and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM7 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

HYDROLOGICAL

24. Surface Water Management Scheme

Prior to commencement of development a detailed Surface Water Management Scheme for the site, based upon the hydrological and hydrogeological context of the development, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The Surface Water Management Scheme shall be implemented before extraction commences, in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To prevent the increased risk of flooding, to improve and protect water quality, and to improve habitat and amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

25. Maintenance and Management of the Surface Water Drainage Scheme

Prior to commencement of development details of maintenance & management of both the surface water sustainable drainage scheme and any receiving system shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall include a plan for the lifetime of the development, the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure

the operation of the surface water drainage scheme throughout its lifetime. The scheme shall be implemented before extraction commences, and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason

To ensure future maintenance of the surface water drainage system, and to prevent the increased risk of flooding and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

26. Wet Working Proposed Water Levels

Extraction of mineral for the purpose of anything other than construction and creation of phase 1A, 1B and processing plant/stockyard and silt management system shall not commence until a scheme of wet working and water level monitoring has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The working and water level monitoring shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development, including mineral extraction, does not harm the water environment, specifically the River Frome designated SSSI and private water supply, in line with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework and 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

27. Interpretive Conceptual Model Update and Report and Monitoring and Mitigation Plan

Extraction of minerals for the purpose of anything other than construction and establishment of the plant site and silt management system shall not commence until:

- A) A revised scheme of surface water and groundwater monitoring and reporting have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority; and
- B) surface water and groundwater monitoring as specified in the approved revised scheme of surface water and groundwater monitoring, shall be undertaken for a continuous period of not less than 12 months; and
- C) within 2 months of completion of surface water and groundwater monitoring, a report (based on the surface water and groundwater

monitoring collection of data) and monitoring and mitigation plan shall be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. This report shall comprise of an updated conceptual model showing the relative relationship between pre-worked surface water flows, groundwater levels and proposed working water level elevations stated in the planning application addendum, (November 2023 and September 2024) , updated impact assessment calculations including the loss of the sand and gravel solid strata and outline any need to augment flows in Hurst Stream and Moreton Stream. Thereafter, mineral extraction shall at all times be fully compliant with Interpretive Conceptual Model Update report and Monitoring and Mitigation plan, as approved.

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development, including mineral extraction, does not harm the water environment specifically the River Frome designated SSSI, in line with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' and Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

28. Water Storage Pond

Extraction of minerals for the purpose of anything other than the construction and establishment of phase 1A, 1B, the plant site and silt management system shall not commence until details of the above-ground-level water storage pond and associated bunding to be constructed in the area of the application site referred to as Phase 6C, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The water storage pond and bunding shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

29. Depth of Water Bodies

The maximum depth of the water bodies that will form as a result of the development hereby approved, and retained upon restoration, shall be strictly limited to the following:

- Hurst Farm
Main Dredging Lake
 - 8m AOD Phase 1B
 - 25m AOD
 - Phase 4B - 21.5m AOD

- Station Road
Phase 8A/9A - 6m AOD
Main Dredging Lake -6m AOD

A survey confirming the final depths of the water bodies following restoration shall be provided to the Mineral Planning Authority if requested by the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt, and to ensure compliance with the approved plans and in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

30. Annual Monitoring Reports

Annual surface and groundwater monitoring reports shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority by 1st March each year for approval. The reports shall include the extent of the works in the past 12 months, observed water levels and flows and compliance/non-compliance issues in relation to the approved monitoring and mitigation plan. Continued mineral extraction shall at all times be fully compliant with the approved monitoring and mitigation plan and the Minerals Planning Authority approval.

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development, including mineral extraction, does not harm the water environment in line with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework and 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

31. No Importation of materials to site, or land raising in Flood Zone 3

No import of materials to the site for permanent deposition shall be allowed and no land raising shall take place within Flood Zone 3.

Reason

In the interests of flood risk safety and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM3 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

LANDSCAPE

32. Early Landscaping Scheme (Part 1)

Prior to commencement of development, a detailed scheme of landscaping shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall include screening banking/mounding between the car park and the B3390 main road,

and shall include substantial appropriate native planting, including larger growing tree species including oak and field maple. New areas of naturalistic woodland planting shall be incorporated into the overall design to restore ecological function and contribute to a rich mosaic of habitats in the landscape. The approved landscaping scheme shall be constructed in within 2 months of the date of commencement of development and all soft landscaping in conjunction with the Pre Planting scheme as shown on Plan no. HF-523 31 shall be planted in the next available planting season following construction of the Hurst Farm site entrance and haul road.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

33. Landscaping Scheme (Part 2)

The development hereby permitted may not proceed beyond Phase 6b until a further scheme of restoration landscaping covering the Hurst Farm site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall be based on the approved restoration plan, and include details of hedgerow and tree planting, and details of fencing and gates.

The approved planting scheme shall be carried out in the first available planting season after completion of Phase 6b. Any plants which die or are removed shall be replaced within the first five years.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

34. Landscaping Scheme (Part 3)

The development hereby permitted may not proceed beyond Phase 11D until a further scheme of restoration landscaping is approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall cover both the Hurst Farm and the Station Road areas. This scheme shall be based on the approved restoration plan, and include details of hedgerow and tree planting, and details of fencing and gates.

The approved planting scheme shall be carried out in the first available planting season following completion of Phase 11D. Any plants which die or are removed shall be replaced within the first five years.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

35. Soil Resource Strategy (SRS)

Prior to commencement of development a Soil Resource Strategy shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. This scheme shall provide for the safeguarding and reuse of soil resources on site. This shall include:

- Separate storage between topsoil and subsoil bunds;
- Grassing and weed control of soil storage bunds, including seed mixtures;
- Ground preparation and soil stripping methods;
- Handling of soils in appropriate weather conditions;
- Best practice for soil handling, as set out by Defra and Institute of Quarrying, etc.

All handling, storage, and use of soils, for the duration of the development, must be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To ensure the appropriate handling and preservation of soil resources for use in restoration and in accordance with Policies RS1, DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

HIGHWAYS TRANSPORTATION

36. Construction Logistics Plan (CLP)

Prior to commencement of development a Construction Logistics Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The CLP shall include:

- Construction vehicle details (number, size, type, and frequency of movement)
- A programme of construction works and anticipated deliveries
- Timings of deliveries so as to avoid, where possible, peak traffic periods
- A framework for managing abnormal loads
- Contractors' arrangements (compound, storage, parking, turning, surfacing, and drainage)
- Wheel cleaning facilities

- Vehicle cleaning facilities
- Inspection of the highways serving the site (by the developer or his contractor and Dorset Highways) prior to work commencing at regular, agreed intervals during the construction phase
- A scheme of appropriate signage of vehicle route to the site
- A route plan for all contractors and suppliers to be advised on
- Temporary traffic management measures where necessary

The development must be carried out in accordance with the approved Construction Logistics Plan.

Reason

To minimise the likely impact of construction traffic on the surrounding highway network and prevent the possible deposit of loose material on the adjoining highway and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

37. Vehicle Access Construction Hurst Farm

Prior to commencement of development, details and specification of the new vehicular access onto the B3390 at Hurst Farm site shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority and approved in writing. The first 20.00 metres, measured from the rear edge of the highway must be laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved specifications.

Reason

To ensure that a suitably surfaced and constructed access to the site is provided that prevents loose material being dragged and/or deposited onto the adjacent carriageway causing a safety hazard and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

38. Vehicle Access Construction Station Road

Details and specification of the new vehicular access onto the B3390 from the Station Road site shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority and approved in writing prior to any commencement of development on the Station Road site. The first 20.00 metres, measured from the rear edge of the highway must be laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved specifications.

Reason

To ensure that a suitably surfaced and constructed access to the site is provided that prevents loose material being dragged and/or

deposited onto the adjacent carriageway causing a safety hazard and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

39. Footpath around Hurst Farm Lake

Prior to the development proceeding beyond Phase 6A, details of the permissive footpath to be constructed around the main Hurst Farm Lake shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The section of the footpath from A to B (marked on Restoration Plan Hurst Farm HF- 523-38) shall be constructed prior to the development proceeding to Phase 7a. The path shall be regularly cleared of any overgrowth for the duration of the development. The remainder of the footpath from B to C to D to A (as shown on Plan HF -523-38) shall be constructed as part of the final restoration.

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of public safety and visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

40. Permissive Bridleway Route – Moreton Station to Moreton Village

Prior to any works to form the new access to the Station Road site, details of measures to ensure the safety of users of the permissive bridleway route between Moreton Station and Moreton Village (as secured in the Section 106 Legal Agreement), shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. These measures should include details of fencing along the route, and appropriate barriers and signage at the crossing between the new access to the Station Road site and the permissive footpath. The approved measures shall be implemented prior to the extraction of any mineral from the planning application site post phases 1a and 1b. The approved/implemented details shall be maintained for the duration of the development hereby approved.

Reason

In the interest of public safety and visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

41. Turning/manoeuvring and parking construction at Hurst Farm

Prior to the extraction of any mineral as part of the development hereby approved, the turning/manoeuvring and parking area shown on Drawing Number HF-523- 10C, shall have been constructed, completed, and marked out. Thereafter, these areas, must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and made available for the purposes specified.

Reason

To ensure the proper and appropriate development of the site and to ensure that highway safety is not adversely impacted upon and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

42. Turning/manoeuvring and parking construction at Station Road B3390

Prior to the extraction of any mineral in phases 7A – 12 inclusive, the turning/manoeuvring and parking area shown on Drawing Number HF-523- 33D, shall have been constructed, completed, and marked out. Thereafter, these areas, must be permanently maintained, kept free from obstruction and made available for the purposes specified.

43. Visibility Splays at Hurst Farm entrance

Prior to the extraction of any mineral as part of the development hereby approved, the visibility splay areas as shown on Drawing Number 174.0006.001, page 153 of the Transport Assessment, must be cleared/excavated to a level not exceeding 0.60 metres above the relative level of the adjacent carriageway. The splay areas must thereafter be maintained and kept free from all obstructions.

Reason

To ensure that a vehicle can see or be seen when exiting the access and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

44. Visibility Splays at Station Road B3390 entrance

No works to construct this entrance (including tree or hedge removal) shall take place prior to the extraction of any mineral beyond phase 6a in the development hereby approved. The visibility splay areas as shown on Drawing Number 174.0006.004, page 154 of the Transport Assessment, must be cleared/excavated to a level not exceeding 0.60 metres above the

relative level of the adjacent carriageway. The splay areas must thereafter be maintained and kept free from all obstructions. There shall be no HGVs using the Station Road site entrance, other than those for collection and delivery of plant and equipment.

45. Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Numbers

The maximum daily number of HGV movements using the Hurst Farm site entrance is limited to 200 (100 in and 100 out).

Reason

In the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the area and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

46. Traffic Numbers Recording

Appropriate records of Heavy Goods Vehicle traffic entering and leaving the site in connection with the development hereby approved shall be maintained by the operator. Copies of these records shall be made available to the Mineral Planning Authority within 10 working days of a request. All such records shall be kept for at least two years.

Reason

To allow the MPA to monitor compliance and traffic generation from the site in the interests of highway safety and the amenity of the area and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

47. Wheel Cleaning of Lorries

No HGV from the site shall enter the public highway unless their wheels and chassis are sufficiently clean so as to prevent material being deposited on the highway. All Heavy Goods Vehicles must use the on-site wheel wash facility before leaving the site.

Reason

To prevent mud and dust from getting onto the highway in the interests of highway safety and amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

48. Details of Bridge Conveyor

Details of the Conveyor Bridge and the Conveyor, from the Processing Plant to the Station Road site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. These

details must be submitted and approved prior to the development proceeding beyond Phase 6A. The Conveyor Bridge and Conveyor shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. No mineral shall be extracted from the Station Road site until the Conveyor Bridge is completed and operational.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and highway safety and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

49. Removal of Bridge Conveyor

The Conveyor Bridge shall be fully removed within six months of the cessation of mineral extraction at Station Road, or by 31 December 2048, whichever is earliest.

Reason

In the interest of visual amenity and highway safety and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

50. Transport of Mineral from Station Road

No mineral extracted from the Station Road site is permitted to be transported to the Hurst Farm site using vehicles on a public highway.

Reason

To ensure that unnecessary HGV traffic movements on the public highway are minimised in the interests of amenity and highway safety and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM2 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

51. Sheeting of loaded lorries

All loaded lorries leaving the site carrying sand or gravel shall be adequately sheeted to secure their loads and prevent the emission of dust or other debris.

Reason

To prevent mud and dust getting onto the public highway and in the interests of highway safety and amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

52. Maintenance of Plant and Vehicles & Use of Silencers

All vehicles, plant and machinery operated within the site shall be

maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specification at all times and shall be fitted with and use effective silencers to prevent unnecessary noise.

Reason

To limit noise generated by the operations on the local community and within the area and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM2 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

53. Fencing

Details of any fencing to be erected on either Station Road or Hurst Farm sites shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority, prior to being erected.

Reason

In the interests of public safety and visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

RESTORATION – AFTERCARE

54. Notification of Completion of Mineral Extraction

Within one week of the completion of mineral extraction operations, the operator will give the Mineral Planning Authority written notification that mineral extraction is complete.

Reason

In order to ensure compliance with conditions post mineral extraction and in accordance with Policy DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

55. Prohibition on Importation of Waste

No waste material shall be imported into the site for any reason including filling or deposition.

Reason

For the avoidance of doubt, and to ensure that the restoration scheme is followed and in accordance with Policies RS1, DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

56. Restoration and Aftercare Notification

The Mineral Planning Authority shall be notified in writing within one month of the:

- a. commencement of any phase of restoration works;
- b. completion of any phase of restoration works;
- c. completion of final restoration; and
- d. completion of aftercare under this permission.

Reason

To ensure that restoration works can be completed in accordance with other conditions and in accordance with Policies RS1 and DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014)

57. Restoration Monitoring and Verification

Within 6 months of the commencement of any restoration works, a revised restoration plan, based on the interpretive conceptual model and water level monitoring data shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority for approval in writing. The revised plan will include post restoration monitoring and a verification plan following the completion of works. Restoration will be undertaken in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To ensure that the proposed development, including mineral extraction, does not harm the water environment in line with paragraph 181 of the National Planning Policy Framework and 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM3 and DM5 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

58. Restoration of site entrances

Detailed drawings showing a final restoration landscaping scheme for future arrangements regarding the junctions with the B3390 following cessation of mineral extraction, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority 3 years before final extraction. The junctions shall be reduced in size, with removal of high kerbs and introduction of new smaller scale kerbs, gates and landscaping. The approved details shall be implemented within 1 year of the date of final cessation of mineral extraction.

Reason

In the interests of visual amenity and in accordance with Policies DM1 and DM4 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

59. Restoration of Site Haul Roads and Entrances

Within 6 months of the cessation of extraction of mineral at the site, a detailed scheme showing the removal of the tarmac/concrete surfacing on haul roads and access tracks and any security fencing/gates shall be submitted for approval in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall include soft and hard landscaping, pedestrian and cyclist entrances and design and any type of fencing and gates. The approved details shall be implemented within 1 year of the date of final cessation of mineral extraction.

Reason

To ensure the site is developed appropriately post mineral extraction and in accordance with Policies DM1, DM4 and DM8 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

60. Aftercare

An aftercare scheme shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority within 6 months of completion of extraction in Phase 4a. Aftercare on a phased basis shall be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason

To secure long-term nature conservation benefits and in accordance with Policies RS1 and DM1 of the Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Minerals Strategy (2014).

Informatives

Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 39 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant/agent was updated of any issues and provided with the

opportunity to address issues identified by the case officer.

Informative: Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)

The submitted CEMP must include safeguarding measures to deal with the following pollution risks:-the use of plant and machinery-wheel washing and vehicle wash-down and disposal of resultant dirty water-oils/chemicals and materials-the use and routing of heavy plant and vehicles-the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds-the control and removal of spoil and waste.

Informative: Prior Land Drainage Consent (LDC)

Prior Land Drainage Consent (LDC) may be required from DC's FRM team, as relevant LLFA, for all works that offer an obstruction to flow to a channel or stream with the status of Ordinary Watercourse (OWC) – in accordance with s23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991. The modification, amendment or realignment of any OWC associated with the proposal or under consideration, is likely to require such permission. We would encourage the applicant to submit, at an early stage, preliminary details concerning in-channel works to the FRM team. LDC enquiries can be sent to floodriskmanagement@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Informative: Highways

In addition to this permission, the highway improvement(s) referred to in the recommended condition above must be carried out to the specification and satisfaction of the Highway Authority in consultation with the Planning Authority and it will be necessary to enter into an agreement, under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, with the Highway Authority, before any works commence on the site. The applicant should contact Dorset Council's Highways Development team.

They can be reached by
email at

highwaysdevelopment@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk, or in writing at Highways Development team, Economic Growth and Infrastructure, Dorset Council, County Hall, Dorchester, DT1 1XJ.

Informative: Environmental Permit

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 require a permit to be obtained for any activities which will take place:

- on or within 8 metres of a main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 8 metres of a flood defence structure or culverted main river (16 metres if tidal)
- on or within 16 metres of a sea defence
- involving quarrying or excavation within 16 metres of any main river, flood defence (including a remote defence) or culvert

- in the floodplain of a main river if the activity could affect flood flow or storage and potential impacts are not controlled by a planning permission

Further Notes

The construction of a 'bridged conveyor crossing' will require a licence in accordance with the Highways Act 1980 Section 176: Restriction on construction of bridges over highways.

A condition of that licence will be that the applicant follows the full Technical Approval process detailed in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridge (DMRB) CG 300 Technical Approval of Highway Structures.

The requirements for clearance above the highway for a lightweight structure and the lateral clearance to the supports are detailed in DMRB CD 127 Cross-sections and headrooms.