

**TO:** PLANNING & REGULATORY COMMITTEE **DATE:** 23 September 2015

**BY:** PLANNING DEVELOPMENT TEAM MANAGER

**DISTRICT(S)** TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL **ELECTORAL DIVISION(S):**  
**Godstone**  
*Mrs Windsor*

**PURPOSE:** FOR DECISION

**GRID REF:** 533487 151988

**TITLE:** MINERALS / WASTE - TA/2014/1884

## SUMMARY REPORT

**North Park Quarry, North Park Lane, Godstone, Surrey, RH9 8ND.**

**The extraction of sand and progressive restoration to agriculture and woodland; and the continued temporary diversion of bridleways 142 and 148 (parts) and temporary stopping up of footpath 121 and 143 (part), without compliance with Condition 3 of planning permission TA00/326 dated 22 November 2000, to allow an extension in time for the working of sand until 2020, with the restoration of the site by 31 December 2022.**

The proposed development comprises an application under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) for the continued extraction of sand from land to the south and west of North Park Quarry until 2020, with restoration by 31 December 2022. This is in line with the existing permission for the removal of the processing plant and complete restoration of North Park Quarry. The reason for the extension is as a result of the sand being worked slower than anticipated, due to economic conditions with lower sales in sand over recent years.

North Park Quarry lies within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and the Green Belt, and is partially covered by the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Tandridge District Council has raised concerns about the extension in time, and the continued impacts on air quality, the visual impact on the AONB and AGLV and the delay to the reinstatement of local rights of way. Objections have been raised in terms of air quality, however based on the data submitted as part of the approved Dust Management Scheme and Dust Action Plan, there is no evidence to suggest that that the development will cause harm to health. There have been no objections from technical consultees. In relation to the impact on local amenity in terms of dust, noise, visual impact, traffic or hydrology, Officers consider that the existing conditions and mitigation measures will continue to provide adequate safeguards.

Minerals can only be worked where they are found and despite the site being in the Green Belt, AGLV and partially within the AONB, the national need for this industrial mineral is an important consideration. The impact of the proposal on the AONB and AGLV is judged to be acceptable, in that the temporary nature of the development, national benefits and public interest, the lack of alternatives, quality of the restoration proposed, would constitute exceptional circumstances. Officers therefore consider that the need for the mineral clearly outweighs any temporary impacts of this extension to the timetable for working and restoration and that the scheme meets the policy requirement for mineral extraction in the Green Belt, in that high environmental standards can be maintained and the site can be well restored within an acceptable timescale.

**The recommendation is to PERMIT subject to conditions**

## APPLICATION DETAILS

### ***Applicant***

Sibelco UK

### ***Date application valid***

7 November 2014

### ***Period for Determination***

27 February 2015

### ***Amending Documents***

Amending landscaping plans and associated documentation (email dated 23/04/15), enclosing the following drawings:

R01/P27/004B - Quarry Phasing 2016

R01/P27/005B - Quarry Phasing 2018

R01/P27/006B - Quarry Phasing 2020

R01/P27/007A - Final Restoration

R01/P27/011B - Planting Plan

R01/P27/012 - Woodland and Hedgerow Planting Schedule

Scheme of Restoration and Landscaping (May 2015)

## SUMMARY OF PLANNING ISSUES

This section identifies and summarises the main planning issues in the report. The full text should be considered before the meeting.

	<b>Is this aspect of the proposal in accordance with the development plan?</b>	<b>Paragraphs in the report where this has been discussed</b>
Mineral Issues and Need	Yes	34 – 38
Highways, Traffic & Access	Yes	39 – 41
Noise	Yes	50 – 51
Air Quality – Dust	Yes	52 – 59
Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Surface Water	Yes	60 – 62
Landscape AONB/AGLV	Yes	63 – 69
Ecology & Biodiversity	Yes	70 – 74
Rights of Way	Yes	75 – 78
Restoration and Aftercare	Yes	79 – 84
Green Belt	Yes	86 - 89

## ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL

### ***Site Plan***

Plan

### ***Aerial Photographs***

Aerial 1 – North Park Quarry (Location)

Aerial 2 – North Park Quarry (Site Area)

## Site Photographs

Figure 1 – Southern extension area of NPQ - View SE

Figure 2 – Southern extension area of NPQ - View S

Figure 3 – View west toward western extension area of NPQ along conveyor route (link to Pendell Quarry)

Figure 4 – Western extension area (view south toward Place Farm Road)

## BACKGROUND

### *Site Description*

- 1 North Park Quarry has historically covered some 99 hectares (ha), including the processing plant site of some 6ha; and with some 22ha which have undergone restoration and 9ha in interim restoration. The quarry lies in a valley between the North Downs and the Greensand Ridge with the land rising from south to north across the site. The quarry is located in a rural area between the villages of Bletchingley and Godstone with the M25 motorway to the north and the A25 to the south. The land is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and falls within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The northern section of the quarry falls within the southern extent of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Access to the application site is gained from a purpose built haul route linking the quarry to Junction 6 of the M25, north east of the site.
- 2 The surrounding land use is predominantly agricultural however there is a golf course to the south of the site. Kitchen Copse an area of ancient woodland that has been designated a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), lies to the north west of the site. The nearest residential properties are to the east of the quarry on North Park Lane; and to the west at Place Farm.

### *Planning History*

- 3 Sand working at North Park Quarry commenced following the grant of planning permission (ref.TA76/155/298) in January 1977, which allowed the winning of silica sand from a 12ha site directly west of North Park Lane. Working has been completed in this area and the land restored to a lower level. A second planning permission (ref.TA81/796/1336) was granted in May 1982, which enabled a westward extension of the previous workings from an area of approx. 20.5ha but also the re-grading of the extracted site and surrounding land amounting to a total of 27.6ha. Both the 1977 and 1982 consents were granted subject to conditions including one requiring that the silica sand extracted would be transported via the A25 to the company's then Holmethorpe Works, Redhill for processing and despatch.
- 4 A further 3.6ha extension to the extraction area previously permitted in 1982 was granted in July 1990 (ref.TA90/0284), which was varied to enable the programme of extraction and restoration of working to be revised to extend the period of extraction until 2010 with restoration to be completed by 2015. In November 2000 planning permission (ref.TA00/0326) was granted for the extraction of sand from land to the south and west of North Park Quarry until 2014 and restoration by 2016. The application also included the progressive restoration of the whole of the site to agriculture and woodland, the retention and use of the existing mineral despatch plant and associated accesses, the temporary diversion of parts of bridleways 142 and 148; and the temporary stopping up of part of footpath 143.
- 5 On 19 July 2004 planning permission (ref.TA02/0183 & RE02/0268) was granted for the construction of a replacement sand processing plant for the one then at Holmethorpe, dedicated haul route, new access onto the B2235 Godstone Hill Road with associated woodland planting, landscaping and other matters. This planning permission involved

the processing of raw silica sand extracted at North Park Quarry and the export of processed silica sand utilising the new access onto the B2235. The planning application also allowed for a sand / soil rootzone blending area whereby peat (or a similar material) and soil is imported to the quarry site and is blended with sand to produce sports sands. In September 2008 planning permission was granted (ref.TA08/0185 & RE02/0255) for the 'as built' processing plant development at North Park Quarry, as the processing plant and associated elements were not carried out in accordance with the 2004 planning permission.

- 6 On 23 March 2012 planning permission (ref.TA09/1536) was granted for the extraction of some 2.5 million tonnes of sand over a period of eight years from Pendell Quarry situated to the west of the existing North Park Quarry with progressive restoration to agriculture, woodland and nature conservation. The extracted sand would be transported via a covered conveyor to North Park Quarry for processing within the existing processing plant and then dispatched via the existing haul route. The processing plant had planning permission until 2014, however planning permission (ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876) was granted allowing a further period of time for the processing and transport of minerals at North Park Quarry until 31 December 2020 in order to receive and process mineral from Pendell, with restoration to agriculture and nature conservation by 31 December 2022. All pre-commencement conditions have been approved, with works on the conveyor belt being completed in September 2014. Soil stripping for the first cell of Pendell Quarry has been completed and excavation has commenced.
- 7 Applications (SCC refs. 2014/0135 and 2014/0136) have been submitted as variations to the Pendell Quarry (ref.TA09/1536) and North Park Quarry processing plant (ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876) permissions to provide for an amended dust action plan and dust monitoring scheme removing the use of horizontal sticky pads. These applications are undetermined at the time of writing this report.

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## THE PROPOSAL

- 8 The application is for a variation to Condition 3 of planning permission TA00/326 dated 22 November 2000, to allow an extension in time for the working of sand from 2014 until 2020, with restoration by 31 December 2022. The reason for the extension is as a result of the sand being worked slower than anticipated, due to economic conditions with lower sales in sand over the last 5 to 6 years. The application will require an amendment to the quarry phasing and will not amend the working and restoration of the western section of North Park Quarry, which is to be restored by the end of 2016.
- 9 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement dated 2014, which is an update to the original ES submitted with the original planning application in 2000.

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## CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICITY

### *District Council*

- 10 Tandridge District Council – Planning

*'Concern is raised about the proposed extension of time for the working of sand until 2020 and the subsequent extension of time for restoration of the site as it is considered that this:*

a) will result in poor air quality continuing for a further period of time to the detriment of the occupiers of local dwellings. Such poor air quality needs to be satisfactorily addressed to the satisfaction of local residents before these extensions in time are allowed;

b) will lead to the adverse visual impact of North Park Quarry on the local landscape, including the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the area of Great Landscape Value, continuing for a further period of time; and

c) will result in the adverse impact on the local rights of way network continuing for users of this network.'

### **Consultees (Statutory and Non-Statutory)**

- 11 **Environment Agency**  
No objection
- 12 **Natural England**  
No objection
- 13 **Sutton and East Surrey Water**  
No comments received
- 14 **County Highways - Transportation Development Planning**  
No objection
- 15 **County Ecologist**  
No objection
- 16 **County Landscape Officer**  
No objection. Recommended that further information be submitted (listed above under amending documents).
- 17 **Countryside Access Officer - Rights of Way**  
No objection
- 18 **County Air Quality Consultant**  
No objection
- 19 **County Environmental Enhancement Officer**  
No objection
- 20 **Environmental Assessment**  
The Environment Statement contains sufficient information to be deemed compliant with the EIA Regulations 2011. There was further information requested under Regulation 22 in respect of landscaping plans, which was duly submitted by the applicant.

### **Parish/Town Council and Amenity Groups**

- 21 **Bletchingley Parish Council**  
Objection on the following grounds:  
a) prolonged development of a Green Belt site (details included - visual impact from Surrey Hills AONB and rights of way would be severe, delay in reinstatement of rights of way, need for reserves not convincingly demonstrated, restoration should be implemented as soon as each face is worked and assurances by the applicant cannot provide sufficient protection)

b) deterioration of air quality due to extensive cumulative quarry workings (PM10 particulate dust of greatest concern and increased working area would increase dust generation)

22 **Godstone Parish Council**

No objection

23 **Quarry Observation Group**

Concerns over dust generation from the extensive area of quarry that will remain open for an extended period of time and the effectiveness of the current monitoring. Concerns of use of abstraction water to suppress dust and exceeding the exemption limits in terms of water usage.

24 **British Horse Society**

Request that a condition is placed on any permission requiring the dedication of a perimeter bridleway.

25 **Godstone Village Association**

Objection on the following grounds: need not demonstrated, Green Belt and continued visual impact, loss of public amenity from continued diversion of rights of way, air quality and cumulative effect from 3 quarries in area and possible effects on health.

26 **The Ramblers Association (Godstone area)**

Objection, requiring the local community have their rights of way restored to their original routes.

27 **White Hill Residents' Association**

Objection on the following grounds: AONB and demonstration that the extraction is in the public interest; contrary to the objective of minimising the impact on local amenity and ensuring prompt and effective restoration; need which cannot be met elsewhere; assessment needed of sand quality; contrary to policy in ensuring restoration completed as soon as practical; increase in HGV traffic when added to Mercers South permission, resulting in exceedance of the allowable NO<sub>2</sub> levels.

***Summary of publicity undertaken and key issues raised by public***

- 28 The application was publicised by the posting of 2 site notices and an advert was placed in the local newspaper. A total of 21 of owner/occupiers of neighbouring properties were directly notified by letter. In response to the above consultation, 8 letters of representation were received by the County Planning Authority (CPA) objecting to the proposed development, for the following reasons: Green Belt and further impact; negative visual impacts on AONB, AGLV and Place Farm Conservation Area; dust and air quality; noise; adverse cumulative effects from 3 quarries; delay in reinstating the rights of way network; need for sand unwarranted; need for 6 years to extract unwarranted; need for two years for restoration unwarranted; lack of certainty on restoration back to agricultural/conservation use; restoration of ROW148 to its original route is unsuitable; contrary to NPPF, Surrey's Mineral Site Restoration Guidance and Surrey Minerals Plan Policies.

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**PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 29 The County Council as Minerals Planning Authority (MPA) has a duty under Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to determine this application in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case, the statutory Development Plan consists of: the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (SMP2011); the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 (TDCS2008) and Tandridge Local Plan Part 2, July 2014 (TLP2014): Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029.

- 30 This application is submitted under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), which allows planning permission to be given for development of the same description as development already permitted but subject to different conditions. The development, which the application seeks to amend, will by definition have been judged to be acceptable in principle at an earlier date at the time the planning permission was granted. If permitted, the MPA is in effect granting a fresh permission and as such need to look at wider considerations affecting the original grant of permission.
- 31 Section 73 provides a different procedure for such applications from that applying to full applications for planning permission, and requires the local planning authority to consider only the question of the conditions subject to which planning permission should be granted, though in doing so the authority should have regard to all material considerations and determine the application in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The main issues in the determination of this application are the impacts of the development on the Green Belt; AONB and AGLV; residential and environmental amenities; highways, traffic and access; and mineral extraction issues (need).
- 32 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (adopted March 2012) provides guidance to local planning authorities in producing local plans and in making decisions on planning applications. The development plan remains the cornerstone of the planning system, and planning applications, which comply with an up to date development plan should be approved. Refusal should only be on the basis of conflict with the development plan and other material considerations. The NPPF does not change the statutory principle referred to above. The NPPF states that policies in Local Plans should not be considered out of date simply because they were adopted prior to publication of the framework. However, the policies in the NPPF are material considerations which planning authorities should take into account. Due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF.
- 33 The NPPF sets out the Governments approach on the management and planning's role with regard to minerals. Para 142 states that: "*Minerals are essential to support sustainable economic growth and our quality of life. It is therefore important that there is a sufficient supply of material to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. However, since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, it is important to make best use of them to secure their long term conservation*". Para 144 sets out a number of bullet points that should be considered when determining planning applications. Those that are relevant to this proposal include:
- giving great weight to the benefits of the mineral extraction including to the economy;
  - ensure in granting planning permission for mineral development that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/ or from a number of sites in a locality;
  - ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions are controlled, mitigated or removed at source and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties; and
  - provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity to be carried out to high environmental standards through the application of appropriate conditions, where necessary.

## MINERAL ISSUES AND NEED

### **National Guidance**

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014

**Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (SMP2011)**

Policy MC1 – Location of Mineral Development in Surrey

Policy MC8 – Silica Sand Supply

- 34 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 states under para.146, that mineral planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals by providing a stock (at least 10 years for individual silica sand sites) of permitted reserves to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014 recognises that industrial minerals are essential raw materials for a wide range of downstream manufacturing industries and their economic importance therefore extends well beyond the sites from which they are extracted. The NPPG (2014) states under para.90, that the required stock of permitted reserves for each silica sand site should be based on the average of the previous 10 years sales, and that the calculations should have regard to the quality of sand and the use to which the material is put.
- 35 The proposal is for the continued extraction of the industrial mineral - silica sand, which unlike construction sand contains a high proportion of silica in the form of quartz and more importantly a low level of impurities. The significance of the end use rather than the nature of the sand in the ground is recognised by the British Geological Society (BGS), which has defined silica sand as sand used for applications other than construction aggregates and “are valued for physical and chemical properties”. Markets often have very specific requirements for one or more of these properties, and as such sands are generally marketed as ‘specialist sands’ that include industrial processes (for glass, foundry moulds, chemicals, aircrete, bricks and tiles), ‘non-construction aggregates’ (including equestrian sand, sports and leisure sand, horticultural sand) and specialist construction uses.
- 36 Minerals planning raises a number of issues, often related to the fact that minerals can only be worked where they occur, and maintaining an adequate supply of minerals without having a significant impact upon communities and the environment is a challenge. The Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (SMP2011) states that “*exploitation of mineral resources and other mineral development in Surrey should be efficient, environmentally responsible, adequate, as far as possible, to meet the needs of the economy and should not impose significant adverse impacts on the community*”. The SMP2011 highlights that the silica sand resources within Surrey are some of the purest within the country, with low levels of iron and alumina. Silica sand resources, although being part of the Lower Greensand Formation, are much more restricted in extent than the soft sand resource, which limits the choice of alternative locations for future production (Policy MC1 – Location of Mineral Development). Given the scarcity of suppliers of silica sand, it is important to maintain workable reserves where appropriate in order to ensure a continuous and competitive source of supply of the raw materials, ensuring that important mineral resources and sites for mineral development are not sterilised in any way (Policy MC8 – Silica Sand Supply).
- 37 The applicant seeks to extract the remaining 600,000 tonnes of silica sand reserve at the site (permitted in 2000 under ref. TA00/326) over an additional 6 year period (maximum) until 2020. The applicant has carried out exploratory drilling and analyses of the remaining reserves, which has resulted in the above calculation. The reserves fall into three types and are identified by their location within the site;



- Place Farm - low iron/low alumina fine to medium sands suitable for glass and sodium silicate manufacture,
- Southern quarry – sand for use in coloured glass and sports/leisure,
- East of Kitchen Copse – coarse low iron sands for industrial customers.

The sand in the place Farm area (approx. 100,000 tonnes) is anticipated to be worked out by the end of 2015 and will be blended with sand from Pendell Quarry. The various sand types will require appropriate blending and processing to meet customer's requirements, as such the sands can only be worked at a rate appropriate to sales profiles. Residents have questioned the need for the sand however the applicant has confirmed the quality of the remaining sands, and Policy MC8 (SMP2011) ensures that such important mineral reserves are worked and not sterilised in any way.

- 38 The SMP2011 recognises the need for silica sand and the limited areas within the UK where this specialist sand is found, with North Park Quarry and Pendell being the only active workings in Surrey. The proposal seeks an extension of time to complete mineral extraction and the subsequent restoration of the North Park Quarry site and does not seek a physical extension to the working area. There is a continued need for the reserves of this high quality industrial sand, and to sterilise this remaining reserve through not working it, would contradict national and development plan policy. Officers are therefore satisfied there is a need to extend the time by which extraction can cease to assist in maintaining the landbank for the county and to avoid sterilisation of the mineral.

## HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC and ACCESS

### ***Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Core Strategy and Primary Aggregates Development Plan Documents (SMP2011)***

Policy MC14 – Reducing the adverse impacts of mineral development

Policy MC15 - Transport for minerals

### ***Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 (TDCS2008)***

Policy CSP12 - Managing Travel Demand

- 39 Government policy on transport is set out in part 4 'Promoting sustainable transport' of the NPPF (paragraphs 29 to 41). The NPPF recognises the important role transport policies have in facilitating sustainable development and in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives with the Government recognising that different communities will require different policies and measures, and the opportunities for maximising sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. Developments that generate a significant number of movements are required to be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether: opportunities for sustainable transport modes to avoid the need for major transport infrastructure (which will depend on the nature and location of the development) have been taken up; suitable and safe access for all people can be achieved; and cost effective improvements can be undertaken within the transport network to limit the significant impacts of the development, with development only being refused on transport grounds where residual cumulative transport impacts are severe. In relation to mineral development, plans should set environmental criteria for assessing the traffic impacts of proposals.
- 40 The traffic generated by transporting minerals is one of the most significant impacts of mineral working and a concern to those living and travelling in the vicinity of a site. Policy MC15 of the SMP2011 states that applications for mineral development should include a transport assessment of potential impacts on highway safety, congestion and demand management and explore how movement of minerals within and outside the site will address issues of emissions control, energy efficiency and amenity. The policy requires applicants to consider alternatives to road transport, though the supporting text at paragraph 7.9 acknowledges that as the majority of

mineral produced in Surrey is transported over relatively short distances, transport by lorry is often the only practicable, cost effective option.

- 41 The impact of the North Park Quarry operations on traffic levels and the transport network of the area has been previously assessed in the planning applications for the retention of the processing plant and haul road (ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876), and for the extraction of sand from Pendell (ref.TA09/1536), as a western extension to North Park Quarry, both of which were permitted in March 2012. The Scoping Opinion for the proposed development concluded that no further work was required in respect of transport matters. Due to reduced sales of silica sand traffic levels have reduced, however there is no intention to increase traffic levels as part of this proposal. The County Highways Authority have commented that access to the site is by way of a dedicated haul road linking the processing plant with junction 6 of the M25, as such the proposal will not increase the HGV traffic generation of the site. As the majority of HGVs enter and exit the site via the purpose built haul road, the extension of time for the working of the sand will have no significant impact on the local highway network. Officers conclude that the proposal will not adversely impact on the highway network and there would be no reasons for refusal on highway safety or capacity grounds. Officers therefore consider that the proposal is in accordance with the transport policies of the development plan.

## ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITY

### ***Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Core Strategy Development Plan Document (SMP2011)***

Policy MC2 – Spatial Strategy – protection of key environmental interests in Surrey

Policy MC14 – Reducing the adverse impacts of mineral development

Policy MC17 – Restoring mineral workings

Policy MC18 – Restoration and enhancement

### ***Tandridge Local Plan Part 2, July 2014 (TLP2014): Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029***

Policy DP5 – Highway Safety & Design

Policy DP7 – General Policy for New Development

Policy DP21 – Sustainable Water Management

Policy DP22 – Minimising Contamination, Hazards & Pollution (Air Pollution)

### ***Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 (TDCS2008)***

Policy CSP13 – Community, Sport and Recreation Facilities and Services

Policy CSP17 – Biodiversity

Policy CSP20 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy CSP21 – Landscape and Countryside

### *Introduction*

- 42 This part of the report deals with environmental and amenity matters, including: landscape and visual amenity; rights of way; noise; air quality and dust; hydrology/hydrogeology and flood risk; ecology and biodiversity; restoration and aftercare; cumulative impact. The NPPF and NPPG expect mineral planning authorities to ensure that mineral proposals do not have an unacceptable adverse effect on the natural or historic environment or human health. The NPPF states authorities should also take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality. Guidance in relation to implementation of policy in the NPPF on development in areas at risk of flooding and in relation to mineral extraction (including in relation to proximity of mineral workings to communities, dust emissions, noise and restoration and aftercare of mineral sites) is provided in the NPPG. Some of the development plan policies listed above relate to one or more of the issues.

- 43 The Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 (SMP2011) recognises the difficulties in balancing meeting the need for mineral development and ensuring the impact from mineral working does not result in unacceptable impacts on local communities and the environment. Policy MC14 states that proposals for mineral working will only be permitted where a need has been demonstrated and sufficient information has been submitted to enable the authority to be satisfied that there would be no significant adverse impacts arising from the development and sets out matters to be addressed in planning applications. Matters relevant to this application include:
- noise and dust – air quality;
  - flood risk and hydrology;
  - the appearance, quality and character of the landscape;
  - the natural environment and biodiversity;
  - public open space, the rights of way network;
  - cumulative impacts arising from the interactions between mineral developments.
- 44 Policy MC2 gives protection to key environmental interests in Surrey and sets out the information and assessments for the protection of areas of national designation such as AONB's. It will have to be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest, and the applicant can establish that development and restoration can be carried out to the highest standard and in a manner consistent with safeguarding the specific relevant interests. Paragraph 116 of the NPPF outlines the 'exception test', which states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in these designated areas (AONB's) except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. The NPPF sets out that consideration of such applications should include an assessment of: the need for the development; the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area; and any detrimental effect on the environment and landscape and the extent to which that could be moderated.
- 45 Policy MC17 requires mineral working proposals to provide for restoration and post restoration management to a high standard. Sites should be progressively restored or restored at the earliest opportunity with the restoration sympathetic to the character and setting of the wider area and capable of sustaining an appropriate afteruse. For mineral working in the Green Belt afteruses should be appropriate to that designation, these include agriculture, forestry, recreation and nature conservation. For nature conservation afteruses longer term management beyond the standard five year aftercare advised in national policy would be necessary, which the authority would look to secure through legal agreements. A key objective is for enhancement as well as restoration and through Policy MC18 the county council will work with operators and landowners to deliver benefits including enhancement of biodiversity interests at the site and where appropriate as part of a wider area enhancement approach.
- 46 Policy DP7 (6) of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2 (TLP2014) seeks to safeguard existing and secure good standards of new amenity for all current and future occupants of land and buildings. Part 6 of this policy seeks to ensure that proposed development does not significantly harm the amenity of neighbouring properties by reason of pollution (noise, air or light), traffic, or other general disturbance. Policy DP21 (Sustainable Water Management) seeks to ensure that development is carried out in a sustainable way to protect all natural resources for use by future generations, and to adapt against and mitigate the impacts of predicted climate change.

- 47 Policy CSP17 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 (TDCS2008) states that development proposals should protect biodiversity and provide for the maintenance, enhancement, restoration and, if possible, expansion of biodiversity, by aiming to restore or create suitable semi-natural habitats and ecological networks to sustain wildlife in accordance with the aims of the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan. Policy DP19 (TLP2014) (Biodiversity, Geological Conservation & Green Infrastructure) seeks to provide more detail than CSP17, securing protection of protected wildlife sites and landscape areas.
- 48 Policy CSP20 (TDCS2008) advocates that the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape is of primary importance within the AONB, reflecting their national status and provides principles to be followed for their protection. This policy goes on to confirm that the same principles will be applied in the associated AGLV which will be retained for its own sake as a buffer to the AONB and to protect views from and into the AONB. Further, Policy CSP21 of the same seeks protection of the character and distinctiveness of the District's landscapes and countryside for their own sake with new development being required to conserve and enhance landscape character.
- 49 Policy CSP 13 (TDCS2008) seeks to protect the Rights of Way network from developments that would adversely affect the enjoyment of users of the network, and encourages improvements to the network. Policy DP5 (TLP2014) adds further detail to the above core strategy policy, by seeking to retain or enhance existing footpaths and cycleway links.

### Noise

- 50 The applicant carried out noise assessments at North Park Quarry in 2000, 2001 and 2009 as part of the planning applications for the extensions to the quarry working and retention of the processing plant, which will be operational until 2020. The permissions included set noise levels and appropriate noise monitoring surveys, which are undertaken at six monthly intervals. The applicant has provided these survey details which show no exceedances of the appropriate noise limits. In terms of potential for cumulative noise impact, which is an issue raised in the letters of representation, the Environmental Statement (ES) concluded that given the separation distances (2km) between future operational areas of North Park and Pendell quarries, there are expected to be no in-combination effects in terms of noise. No occupied properties are closer than 450m and 800m from future planned concurrent workings.
- 51 The Scoping Opinion for the proposed development concluded that in view of the previous noise assessments and the ongoing noise control, further substantive work was not required in respect of noise. The County Noise Consultant commented that the M25 (which bounds the site to the north) noise dominates the area and for most of the time the quarry operations are not really audible. Officers recognise that some residents have raised noise an area of concern. However, due to adequate controls in terms of hours of working and noise conditions (including monitoring surveys), Officers do not consider that the extension in time and in-combination effects would generate an unacceptable level of noise and therefore the site can operate within the existing appropriate noise limits.

### Air Quality – Dust

- 52 There are two issues concerning airborne sand from quarries – the impact upon residential amenity by causing a nuisance; and the impact upon health. Small particles (PM<sub>10</sub>) are associated with effects on human health and only make up a small proportion of the dust emitted from most mineral workings. These are deposited slowly and may travel 1000m or more from the source but their concentration will decrease rapidly on moving away from the source due to dispersion and dilution. Larger particles (greater than 30µm (µ = microgram)) make up the greatest proportion of dust emitted from mineral working and will largely

deposit within 100m of sources with intermediate particles (10 - 30µm) being likely to travel up to 200-500m. Large and intermediate particles are often referred to as nuisance dust.

- 53 The Scoping Opinion for the proposed development stated that the impact of the North Park Quarry operations on air quality has been previously assessed in the ES submitted with the planning permission (ref.TA00/326) granted in 2000 for the western and southern extensions. That assessment concluded that subject to appropriate management and mitigation, the working and restoration of the quarry would be unlikely to cause nuisance to neighbouring properties in terms of dust deposition. Further assessments were carried out in support of the planning applications (ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876) for the retention of the silica sand processing plant and haul road, and for the Pendell Quarry (ref.TA09/1536), both of which were granted in 2012. The assessment concluded that subject to effective mitigation and management, the residual risk of dust impacts on nearby receptors would be 'low' to 'near zero', and emissions of PM<sub>10</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, respirable crystalline silica, and HGV emissions would comply with the relevant National Air Quality Strategy (NAQS) standards or Environmental Assessment Levels (EALs). The Scoping Opinion concluded that further substantive work was not required in respect of dust effects from the proposed development. However, an amendment to the ES was required to consider the cumulative effects.
- 54 The applicant provided an addendum to the 2009 ES, which sets out an assessment of the cumulative effects from dust associated with the concurrent working of North Park and Pendell quarries. The assessment demonstrated that there would be no net change in dust impacts at the surrounding receptors. The applicant has stated that there are appropriate controls already in place through the provisions of the Dust Management Scheme (DMS) and Dust Action Plan (DAP), which has required the submission of quarterly dust monitoring reports. Dust monitoring has been carried out at six locations around the existing North Park Quarry and the proposed Pendell extension area since December 2002, with gauges to measure dust flux (flow of dust through the air) and dust deposition (dust fallout from the air).
- 55 Concern has been raised in respect of the deterioration of air quality from Tandridge District Council, Bletchingley Parish Council and local residents, commenting that the increased area of working for a longer period of time will create increased dust nuisance. QOG have more specifically requested that in view of the dust data collected to date (as part of the monitoring reports) there should be a suitable site specific limit for North Park Quarry, and if not then there should be some improvement in the method of monitoring dust nuisance. In addition, QOG raise the concern that the MPA need to ensure that the approved dust suppression system can be implemented, as the amount of water utilised by the applicant for sprays drawn from Mercers Lake under an abstraction licence, exceeds their exemption limit (This is a matter for the EA and the applicant).
- 56 The County Air Quality Consultant (CAQC) in reviewing the planning application has referred to the guidance within the Minerals section of the NPPG, which sets out the principles when considering the environmental effects of surface mineral workings. The applicant's addendum to the ES provided more up to date monitoring information (2011-2014) to describe the baseline, and provided an assessment of the deposited and suspended dust impacts. The CAQC was satisfied with the applicant's conclusions in respect of the dust impacts and confirmed that there will be no significant residual impact in respect of dust, providing that there is continued adherence to the DAP for North Park Quarry, which provides the appropriate controls and mitigation. Setting site specific limits would be a matter for the environmental regulator, which would be the Environment Agency. The CAQC supports the use by the applicant of dust flux monitoring using vertical sticky pads gauges as a management tool and also confirms that the abatement/control/mitigation measures proposed by the applicant prominently features controls at source. The CAQC has previously confirmed that the DMS and DAP for

North Park and Pendell quarries would provide adequate monitoring and control in terms of dust and air quality.

- 57 Residents have also raised the issue of increased NO<sub>2</sub> and combined the effects of HGVs associated with the Mercers South traffic raising the NO<sub>2</sub> levels above the allowable levels. After processing, the sand extracted from North Park Quarry is distributed utilising the existing approved dedicated private haul route up to Junction 6 of the M25. The extension in time would not increase the existing level of traffic generation to and from the site. The applicant has stated that the reason for the extension in time is due to a downturn in sales, as such vehicle movements have reduced. The combined effect of vehicle emissions from Mercers South and North Park Quarry was assessed when Mercers South was granted planning permission. However, as stated above there is no increase in daily traffic levels as a result of this extension in time. In addition the North Park Quarry traffic has a dedicated private road direct to the M25, away from the A25.
- 58 Concerns about health impacts have been raised by residents, however the impacts of working of North Park and Pendell quarries were assessed previously in 2012, and it was considered that measures would be taken to ensure that dust generated by the operations would not be significant and that operations would be in line with best available techniques, and there were no significant concerns from technical consultees regarding the risk to health of the local population. The CAQC has confirmed that they are satisfied with the applicant's conclusion in respect of the cumulative effects of the development, in that there would negligible impacts on dust concentrations and would be very unlikely to cause a breach of the National Air Quality Objectives.
- 59 Whilst the concerns of local residents and others are acknowledged, on the basis of the assessments to date, the responses received from technical consultees, Officers consider that with the imposition of appropriate conditions and the DMS / DAP, the proposed extension in time to work the remaining reserves at North Park Quarry would not give rise to significant or unacceptable impacts in terms of air quality. As such Officers consider the proposal is consistent with the aims and objective of national policy and guidance and relevant development plan policy relating to air quality.

### **Hydrology, Hydrogeology and Surface Water**

- 60 The North Park Quarry area lies on the boundary of two surface water catchments (Thames and Southern Regions of the Environment Agency). The North Park Quarry site is in the headwaters of the Medway catchment (Southern region) with surface water sourced from the scarp slope of the North Downs. The applicant has undertaken long term and ongoing hydrogeological monitoring at North Park Quarry, which has been based on the monitoring of groundwater levels within and adjacent to the quarry. The Scoping Opinion in respect of the proposed development stated that, having taken account of the advice given by the County Geotechnical and Hydrological Consultant and the Environment Agency, further substantive work was not likely to be required but recommended that the ES be updated to reflect the fact that the impacts of the working of North Park Quarry will persist for a longer period of time than originally intended, and provide a review of current groundwater monitoring data and an evaluation of the previous hydrogeological and groundwater studies. In addition, a full review of the previous flood risk, drainage and surface water management assessments should be undertaken in light of current policy and guidance, to demonstrate that the work undertaken for the approved schemes is still applicable and relevant.
- 61 The applicant provided an assessment of the potential impacts of the time extension at North Park Quarry and extraction at Pendell on the water environment. The assessment concluded that there are no predicted surface water, flood risk or groundwater impacts, with a recommendation that there would be continued monitoring of the groundwater levels and quality throughout the period of working both quarries. No significant residual

impacts on the water environment are expected, provided that the mitigation measures approved under the 2000 and 2012 permissions continue to be implemented. These measures include working the extension areas dry and to a maximum depth of 2m above the highest groundwater levels, in accordance with the current Environmental Management Plan.

- 62 The Environment Agency raised no objection to the continuation of activities at the site for an extended period of time, based on the assumption that working practices within the site remain in accordance with the current permissions, particularly with regard to drainage, storage of fuel and chemicals, and the currently agreed depths. Surface water drainage is to be carried out in accordance with the currently approved schemes. Officers therefore consider that with the imposition of appropriate conditions, the proposed extension in time to work the remaining reserves at North Park Quarry would not give rise to significant or unacceptable impacts in terms of the water environment.

### **Landscape and Visual Amenity (AONB/AGLV)**

- 63 The land at North Park Quarry is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt and falls within an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). The northern section of the quarry falls within the southern extent of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and therefore an assessment of the developments impact upon the AONB is necessary. In order for planning permission to be granted in this case it is necessary to be satisfied that the development serves a public interest and the proposal is also capable of conserving and enhancing the sensitive and distinctive area of landscape in which it is located. The need to extract sand from this sensitive landscape has already been accepted when planning permission was granted in 2000, however it was for a limited time and the impacts of extending that time need to be assessed.
- 64 The Scoping Opinion for the proposed development stated that the impact of the North Park Quarry operations on the landscape character and visual amenity of the area has been previously assessed in the Environmental Statement submitted with planning application (ref.TA00/0326) for the westward and southward extensions to the North Park Quarry (the subject of this application). That assessment concluded that mineral working would result in further damage to a sensitive landscape (AONB and AGLV) that had already been adversely affected by a number of developments, including mineral extraction and the construction of the M25 motorway, but also recognised the opportunity for the impacts of mineral working to be addressed over the longer term through restoration of the site. A further assessment was carried out for the extension of time for the western part of the North Park Farm Quarry and the retention of the processing plant and access road (ref.TA09/1536). This concluded that the longer time period would give rise to moderate adverse cumulative effects during operation for landscape and visual amenity, with restoration expected to deliver moderate beneficial effects for landscape and minor beneficial effects for visual amenity.
- 65 The Scoping Opinion concluded, following advice from the County Landscape Architect, that further substantive work was not likely to be required in respect of the landscape and visual impacts of the development, but recommended that the ES be updated to reflect the fact that the landscape impacts of the development will persist for a longer period of time than originally intended. The update was to include a clear account of how the previous assessments work together to cover the whole of the North Park Farm Quarry working area for the proposed duration of working and restoration. In addition, a combined summary of the main adverse impacts identified by all the previous assessments and a summary of the mitigation measures that are being implemented to address those impacts, including the final restoration across the whole of the quarry site (i.e. North Park Quarry and Pendell Farm).

- 66 The applicant submitted a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) update, which reviewed the previous LVIA's undertaken in 2000 and 2009, in order to highlight the implications of any effects on the Landscape Character or the Visual Environment as a result of the proposed time extension. The applicant concluded that the landscape and visual impacts as a result of the proposed development will be no more adverse than those stated in the two previous assessments. The County Landscape Officer (CLO) agreed with the summary findings of the assessment on landscape character, in that the extension of time period should not introduce further impacts and the landscape effects will be no more adverse. However, the CLO did raise some concern over the visual assessment, in that the extension of time extends the effect of the range of adverse visual impacts over a significant period, in particular the views from the north (public viewpoints) of a site within the protected landscape of the Surrey Hills AONB. As such, the CLO recommended that the landscape mitigation be reviewed and where necessary enhanced, to include details of a landscape management plan.
- 67 The applicant reviewed the landscape mitigation, which has resulted in slightly amended landscape plans and landscape management. The CLO is satisfied that the amending documents address the concerns raised, in that they now describe clearly the development of the landscape elements through phased operations, followed by restoration. The amending programme of planting, including the timing and extent of woodland and hedgerow planting will provide a better screening effect earlier and for longer, thereby enhancing the landscape mitigation.
- 68 Tandridge District Council have raised no objection to the development, however they have raised concerns that the extension in time will lead to the adverse visual impact on the local landscape, including the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the area of Great Landscape Value. The local parish council, local groups and residents all raise objection to the development and its continued adverse visual impact and impact on the AONB and AGLV, questioning whether it is in the public interest.
- 69 As mentioned above (para.44) the NPPF sets out the 'exception test' for considering development within the AONB, which requires the demonstration of exceptional circumstances and that the development is in the public interest. The need for the extraction of this silica sand resource was demonstrated back in 2000 when planning permission was granted to extract these extension areas to North Park Quarry. The section above on Minerals Issues and Need has demonstrated the quality of the sand and the continued need, as such it remains in the public interest to work the remaining reserves of this specialist sand and not to sterilise them, and minerals can only be worked where they naturally occur. Officers acknowledge that there would be an extended period during which there would be adverse visual harm to the landscape, however this would be outweighed by the nature and the benefits of the scheme in national and local terms. Officers also consider that the proposal is capable of conserving and enhancing this sensitive and distinctive area of landscape in which it is located. Officers therefore conclude that there are exceptional circumstances for the continued working of the sand, and that the proposal complies with national and development plan planning policy relating to landscape and visual impact matters.

### **Ecology & Biodiversity**

- 70 The application area is not covered by any ecological designations, however Kitchen Cope Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) lies adjacent to the application area and Place Pond SNCI lies approximately 270m to the south. The applicant has stated that the impacts of the development were comprehensively assessed in the earlier Environmental Statements supporting the applications permitted in 2000 and 2012 however the county Ecologist recommended that a Phase 1 walkover survey was to be undertaken for the whole of the site and bat detector surveys at agreed locations.



- 71 A Biodiversity Action Plan for North Park Quarry was approved in October 2010 and this sets out an inventory and description of the habitats present on the site; what species are present on the site; and an evaluation of both habitat and species including action plans looking at the current and conservation status, factors that could affect the habitat or species and proposed actions and outcomes.
- 72 The applicant submitted an updated ES (2014), updating the work done in 2000, which involved a Phase 1 survey of the quarry, a bat assessment and results of the great crested newts surveys on ponds to the north of the site. The impacts that were considered relate to the lengthening of the working and restoration period beyond 2015 on the ecology of the site area, with the exception of the plant site, conveyor route to Pendell and access road, which have permission until 2022. The ES concluded that there would be a temporary low-moderate positive effect on both the habitats and species at North Park Quarry.
- 73 Natural England raises no objection to the proposal, as the extension in time for the site is unlikely to have significantly different impacts on the natural environment than currently approved. Surrey Wildlife Trust raises no objection as the application is for development already in existence. The County Ecologist does not consider that there are likely to be any significant ecological impacts on habitats or species resulting from an extension of the working period and the final restoration, and is satisfied that there are adequate controls and mitigation measures within the currently approved schemes.
- 74 The County Ecologist has noted that shells of Roman snails have been found in the areas proposed for restoration to the south and in soil mounds on the south, and necessary surveys are proposed prior to any further working of the area and if necessary, a licence would need to be obtained from Natural England. The applicant has confirmed that appropriate measures are included to address this issue. There is also reference to the potential occurrence of three bird species and the County Ecologist has recommended that an informative be placed on any decision in respect of a watching brief. Officers therefore conclude that the proposed development complies with national and development plan planning policy relating to ecology and biodiversity.

### **Rights of Way**

- 75 There are many rights of way (bridleways and footpaths) that traverse and surround North Park Quarry, some of which have been temporarily diverted as a consequence of quarrying activities. These rights of way link up to the broader rights of way network within the county. The public access arrangements around the site currently involve the diversion of bridleway 142 to the south of the working area running in an east west direction; the diversion of bridleway 148 to the west of the working area; and the stopping up of footpaths 121 and 143 on their original routes to the north and the south of the current working / restoration areas at the quarry.
- 76 This application seeks the continued diversion / stopping up of the above rights of way in the vicinity of North Park Quarry. The applicant has submitted as part of the planning application the proposed restoration and aftercare for the application site including the haul route, which includes the proposed reinstatement of definitive rights of way across the quarry site and the introduction of new definitive and permissive rights of way. This includes the existing current temporarily diverted route of bridleway 142, which will remain in place as a permanent dedicated route in addition to the reinstated route. The applicant also proposes to open an additional footpath along the northern boundary of North Park Quarry, linking the original route of Bridleway 148 to North Park Lane, which can be completed on completion of restoration for this area, by early 2018.

- 77 Tandridge District Council, the local parish and local residents have all raised concerns over the delay to the reinstatement of the local rights of way network however the Countryside Access Officer (Rights of Way) has raised no objection. In addition residents have raised concern over the steep gradient of the re-instated bridleway 148 upon restoration of the site (i.e. along the original route). The issue of the steep gradient was raised by the Ramblers Association in 2000, and was addressed by rights of way officers at the time. Officers commented that the gradient needs to be considered in relation to its location, which is an area of undulating landscape between the North Downs and Greensand Ridge. Steep rights of way are a feature of the North Downs and the majority of the paths in the area would be at a far steeper gradients. The British Horse Society has requested a new definitive perimeter bridleway once the site is restored however this matter had also been investigated previously, and was found to be impractical due to adverse gradients near North Park Lane and the presence of badgers setts in the woodland on the west side of north Park Lane. The applicant has added that circular bridleway routes are available by access to the north of the M25 and a new bridleway would be provided across the northern sections of the Pendell Quarry site to the west.
- 78 Officers acknowledge the concerns about the further delay to the reinstatement of the rights of way network, however the proposed restoration provides for an enhanced and improved network of reinstated and new routes across the site linking to the wider network, which accords with development plan policies.

### **Restoration and Aftercare**

- 79 The SMP2011 requires mineral working proposals to provide for restoration and post restoration management to a high standard, and sites should be progressively restored or restored at the earliest opportunity with the restoration sympathetic to the character and setting of the wider area and capable of sustaining an appropriate afteruse. In 2000 planning permission was granted for this site to be progressively restored to an agricultural use, including an approved aftercare scheme, using existing soils on the lower regraded floor and margins of the quarry.
- 80 The applicant has stated that the restoration concept for North Park Quarry remains unchanged to a predominantly agricultural use at a lower level, which will create a predominantly dry valley feature that reflects the mix of valley and foothill features present in the surrounding landscape. The applicant has submitted restoration phasing plans, planting schedules and final restoration, showing how the site will be progressively restored by 2022. The restoration includes the planting of new and replacement species rich hedgerows and new woodland planting, which will act as wildlife corridors, linking areas of existing ecological interest, designed to complement and enhance the overall nature conservation value of the area.
- 81 In 2012, planning permission (ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876) was granted for the above agricultural/nature conservation restoration, with the extraction of remaining permitted sand in the western section of North Park Quarry prior to the removal of the processing plant and associated infrastructure and final restoration by 2022. The applicant has stated that the restoration of the Place Farm area (western end of NPQ) covered by the above consent will be completed by the end of 2016, and the northern area by 2017, with the exception of the conveyor and associated access to Pendell Quarry. The remaining southern extension area will be worked and restored over the remaining period until 2020, leaving the processing plant area to last, with complete restoration by 2022 which ties in with the 2012 permissions for the processing plant and Pendell Quarry.

- 82 The proposed restoration scheme also makes the provision for the reinstatement of rights of way across the quarry site and the retention of permissive rights of way around the quarry site to enhance the rights of way network within the immediate locality. This includes the provision of rights of way along the restored haul road route. The areas already restored to agricultural land will continue to be subject to an aftercare period and schemes as approved in 2000 and 2008. The applicant submitted an amended 'Scheme of Restoration and Landscaping' (May 2015), which includes details of both the agricultural and planting 5 year aftercare schemes.
- 83 Under the 2012 planning permission, the County Landscape Officer (CLO) considered that the 'holistic' scheme for the restoration of North Park Quarry and Pendell Quarry was appropriate, and complemented the existing landscape. Officers considered that the restoration concept strengthened the landscape character, provided good integration with the Surrey Hills AONB, and offered protection and enhancement of the wider setting including the AONB. The proposed development retains this approved restoration concept for the site, which is principally agricultural with integrated nature conservation elements. Further detail on the landscape management, restoration and aftercare was provided by the applicant following recommendations from the County Landscape Officer, which shows more clearly the development of the landscape elements through phased operations and on to restoration.
- 84 Officers therefore consider that the restoration and aftercare for the site is acceptable in underpinning the existing structural landscape, and accords with the policies of the development plan.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

- 85 Residents have raised the issue of the cumulative impact of three quarries (North Park Quarry, Pendell and Mercers South) operating in the local area, in particular the impact on air quality in respect of dust and HGV emissions. The applicant has addressed the cumulative impacts of working both Pendell and North Park Quarry (NPQ) on air quality, where it has been shown that the impacts would be the same as at present, for North Park Quarry alone. This has been addressed in the air quality section above. With regard to the cumulative impact of working NPQ/Pendell at the same time as Mercers South, this has been previously been addressed when planning permission was granted for Mercers South, where it was concluded that there would be no significant impact from cumulative or interactive uses.

### **METROPOLITAN GREEN BELT**

#### ***National Guidance***

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) 2014

***Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 - Core Strategy Development Plan Document (SMP2011)***

Policy MC3 – Mineral Development in the Green Belt

Policy MC17 – Restoring mineral workings

- 86 The site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt where policies of restraint apply. Government policy on Green Belts is set out in Part 9 'Protecting Green Belt land' (paragraphs 79 to 92) of the NPPF. Government policy and guidance in relation to minerals planning is set out in Part 13 'Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals' (paragraphs 142 to 149) and the 'Minerals' section of the NPPG. Mineral extraction is included in the forms of development listed in paragraph 90 that are not inappropriate in Green Belt '*provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt*'. When determining planning applications paragraph 144 of the NPPF states local planning authorities should '*provide for restoration and aftercare of mineral workings at the earliest opportunity to be carried*

*out to high environmental standards, though the application of appropriate conditions, where necessary'.*

- 87 SMP2011 Policy MC3 states that *'Mineral extraction in the Green Belt will only be permitted where the highest environmental standards of operation are maintained and the land restored to beneficial after-uses consistent with Green Belt objectives within agreed time limits'*. The supporting text at paragraphs 3.45 and 3.47 refer to almost all mineral working in Surrey being in the Green Belt, and the need for restoration and afteruse of mineral workings to be appropriate to the designation and objectives for the use of land in the Green Belt, which include securing nature conservation interest and retaining land in agricultural, forestry and related uses. Policy MC17 requires mineral working proposals to provide for restoration and post restoration management to a high standard. Sites should be progressively restored or restored at the earliest opportunity with the restoration sympathetic to the character and setting of the wider area and capable of sustaining an appropriate afteruse. For mineral working in the Green Belt afteruses should be appropriate to that designation, these include agriculture, forestry, recreation and nature conservation.
- 88 Given the site's Green Belt location it is necessary to consider whether the proposed development would maintain high environmental standards during operation and whether the restoration of the site can be achieved to a good standard and will provide an acceptable afteruse consistent with Green Belt objectives. Much of the consideration of whether high environmental standards could be maintained and whether an appropriate and acceptable restoration can be achieved has already been demonstrated in the sections above. Mineral working is a temporary use of land and minerals can only be worked where they are found.
- 89 The need for the silica sand at North Park Quarry has not changed and this is discussed under mineral need above and in granting planning permission in 2000 and 2012 for the site area it has previously been accepted that the site will be well restored to agriculture and nature conservation. Technical consultees have considered the proposal and their views and issues relating to visual amenity, environmental impacts and the quality of the restoration are considered to be acceptable. Officers acknowledge that the additional period of time in which to work the remaining sand will impact on the openness of the Green Belt. However consideration has to be taken of the siting and use of the processing plant, which has planning permission and can continue to operate until 2020 during which time the impact on the Green Belt and openness would continue. In addition, the longer term view must be taken of the effects on the characteristics and purposes of the Green Belt. Officers conclude that the temporary impacts of the mineral working on the Green Belt would be significantly mitigated by the progressive restoration of the site and as such, will not cause permanent harm to the Green Belt, and therefore the proposal accords with the policies of the development plan.
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- 90 The Human Rights Act Guidance for Interpretation, contained in the Preamble to the Agenda is expressly incorporated into this report and must be read in conjunction with the following paragraph.
- 91 It is the Officers view that the scale and duration of any potential impacts are not considered sufficient to engage Article 8 or Article 1 and that potential impact can be mitigated by the imposition of planning conditions. As such, this proposal is not considered to interfere with any Convention right.
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## CONCLUSION

- 92 The application site is located in the Metropolitan Green Belt where mineral related development need not be inappropriate development provided that high environmental standards are maintained and the site is well restored. Minerals can only be worked where they are found. The District Council, local parishes, residents and other objectors have expressed concerns about various issues including: need for the sand; highways and traffic; landscape impacts; rights of way; air quality and dust; restoration; and Green Belt. The applicant undertook an environmental assessment and has provided further information where necessary.
- 93 Technical consultees have carefully considered the application and information provided and have not objected to the development. The views of technical consultees have been reported under individual issues earlier in the report. There is no reason to believe that high environmental standards cannot be maintained during the continued extraction and progressive restoration of the site.
- 94 Officers consider there is no reason to believe that the site could not be well restored to the proposed after-uses, which are uses consistent with Green Belt objectives. Any adverse impact on the visual amenities of the Green Belt, AONB and AGLV would be limited and adequately controlled. The need for the sand has been demonstrated and is in the public interest and high environmental standards would be achieved and that the site well restored. Officers therefore consider that the proposed development accords with Surrey's Mineral Site Restoration Guidance and Surrey Minerals Plan Policies.

## RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation is to **PERMIT** subject to conditions

### CONDITIONS

#### Approved Documents

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out and completed in all respects strictly in accordance with the terms of this permission, and the following plans:

Title	Drawing No.	Date
Location Plan – Figure 1	R01/P27/001	25.04.2014
Application Boundary – Figure 2	R01/P27/002	24.06.2014
Rights of Way and Services Plan – Figure 3	R01/P27/003	25.04.2014
Quarry Phasing 2016 – Figure 3.4	R01/P27/004B	02.04.2015
Quarry Phasing 2018 – Figure 3.5	R01/P27/005B	02.04.2015
Quarry Phasing 2020 – Figure 3.6	R01/P27/006B	02.04.2015
Final Restoration – Figure 3.7	R01/P27/007A	02.04.2015
Planting Plan	R01/P27/011B	02.04.2015
Woodland and Hedgerow Planting Schedule	R01/P27/012	23.04.2015
Location of Stand Off Cross Sections	R01/P03/061	22.06.00
Stand Off Sections - Place Farm (West Face S1)	001A	08.06.00
Stand Off Sections - Place Farm (South Face S2)	002A	08.06.00
Stand Off Sections - Place Farm (North Face S3)	003A	08.06.00
Stand Off Sections - Place Farm (North Face S4)	004A	08.06.00
Stand Off Sections – Southern Extension	005A	08.06.00
Proposed Quarry Floor Contours	R01/P03/005	May 2000

### Time Limits

- 2 The extraction of minerals shall cease by 31 December 2020 and restoration of the site shall be completed by 31 December 2022 strictly in accordance with the final restoration scheme and Drawing Nos R01/P27/007A dated 02.04.15.
- 3 All buildings, plant, conveyor belts, machinery both fixed and otherwise, vehicular access, internal access roads subject to this permission together with the existing engineering works which provide the access thereto and the surfaced area connected therewith (other than that east of North Park Lane necessary to give access to Sutton and East Surrey Water's Godstone Reservoir) and such works ancillary to the parking of vehicles thereon shall, together with their foundations and bases, be removed from the site in accordance with the timescale outlined in Condition 2 above, or within 24 months of the completion of extraction, whichever is the earlier. All the land where such works stood shall be scarified and covered with sub soil and topsoil and restored in accordance with the approved restoration scheme. (Note. This excludes the processing plant area as permitted under ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876)

### Limitations

- 4 Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary under Parts 17 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any subsequent Order:
  - (a) no plant, building or machinery whether fixed or moveable other than those permitted by this application, shall be erected on the application site;
  - (b) no lights other than those permitted by this application shall be installed or erected at the application site.

### Hours of Working

- 5 Except in emergencies to maintain safe site operations which shall be notified to the County Planning Authority as soon as practicable, no lights shall be illuminated nor shall any operations or activities authorised or required by this permission be carried out except between the following times:

0700 - 1800 hours Monday to Friday  
0700 - 1300 hours Saturdays

Notwithstanding this the formation of the screen bunds around the site and their subsequent removal when required for restoration, shall only be carried out between:

0800 – 1700 hours Monday to Friday  
other than in the area of Place Farm where works shall be carried out between:  
0830 – 1700 hours Monday to Friday  
0900 – 1300 hours Saturdays

there shall be no working on Sundays, Public, Bank Holidays or National Holidays.

### Phasing of working

- 6 The working of the site shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the quarry phasing plans: Drawing Nos R01/P27/004B, R01/P27/005B, R01/P27/006B

## Vehicle Movements and Access

- 7 The means of access for heavy goods vehicles approaching and exiting the site from the north, east or south shall be via the haul route from the B2235 Godstone Hill only. There shall be no means of access to and from North Park Lane and A25 Bletchingley Road for vehicles leaving and approaching to and from these directions. Goods vehicles associated with the site should at no time travel through the centre of Godstone Village.
- 8 There shall be no means of access either vehicular or pedestrian from the application site to Church Lane or Place Farm Road.

## Surface Water and Groundwater Protection

- 9 No dewatering or pumping of water from the sub-strata shall take place without the prior permission of the County Planning Authority.
- 10 No extraction shall take place lower than 2 metres above the level of the highest seasonal watertable which is estimated to be between 85 to 87 metres AOD in the western part of the site and 100 metres AOD in the southern part of the site. Having regard to the approved groundwater monitoring scheme, if, at any time during the course of mineral excavation, extraction takes place lower than 2 metres above the highest recorded seasonal watertable, the resultant void will be backfilled with such indigenous material as may be available on the site to bring the level of the quarry floor back to at least 2 metres above the level of the highest recorded seasonal water table. The method of working in accordance with the above shall be such as to maintain an even sloping pit floor.
- 11 Appropriate groundwater level and chemical monitoring shall continue to take place including the following:
  - a) topographic surveys of the quarry to be undertaken up to a maximum of four per year
  - b) monitoring of groundwater levels in boreholes to be undertaken four times per year
  - c) samples of groundwater will be taken once a year from each of four boreholes, two up gradient and two down gradient of operations. The determinands shall be: pH, suspended solids, iron, aluminium, copper, lead, zinc, ammonium, nitrate, and sulphate
  - d) data collected will be submitted to the County Planning Authority and Environment Agency on an annual basis. The location of the boreholes to be identified on a plan to be submitted alongside the data collected.
- 12 No watercourse shall be incorporated into or be allowed to discharge into the working. Any watercourses which are within the site shall be diverted around the working area. All possible steps shall be taken to prevent any suspended matter or sand passing into any watercourse from the extraction and subsequent restoration operations. There shall be no discharge of water, sand, oil, grease or any other offensive or injurious matter into any watercourse.
- 13 Any facilities for the storage of oils, fuels or chemicals shall be sited on impervious bases and surrounded by impervious bund walls. The bund capacity shall give 110% of the total volume for single and hydraulically linked tanks. If there is multiple tankage, the bund capacity shall be 110% of the largest tank or 25% of the total capacity of all tanks, whichever is the greatest. All filling points, vents, gauges and sight glasses and overflow pipes shall be located within the bund. There shall be no outlet connecting the bund to any drain, sewer or watercourse or discharging onto the ground. Associated pipework shall be located above ground where possible and protected from accidental damage.

- 14 Adequate drip trays shall be provided for static plant and machinery and any materials accidentally contaminated by oil spillage shall be removed immediately. All moveable plant and machinery shall be parked within the approved parking area outside the normal working day.

### **Rights of Way**

- 15 The temporarily diverted route of Bridleway No 148 should be 2.5 metre wide and constructed from 150 mm of consolidated reject brick hardcore or crushed concrete overlaid with 150 mm of consolidated limestone scalplings or road planings.
- 16 On completion of the restoration in accordance with Drawing No R01/P27/007A` Footpaths Nos 121 and 143 and Bridleways Nos 142 and 148 shall be reinstated to an appropriate standard and specification to be submitted and approved in writing by the County Planning Authority.

### **Noise**

- 17 When measured at, or recalculated as at, a height of 1.2 m at least 3.5 m from a noise sensitive building, the level of noise emitted as a result of any activity or operation at the site and associated with the development hereby permitted shall not exceed 55 LAeq for any 0.5 hour period.
- 18 Appropriate noise monitoring surveys shall be undertaken at intervals of six months and the results of noise monitoring surveys shall be reported to the County Planning Authority within six weeks of the date of each survey. The data reported from each survey will include:
- Survey date
  - Survey personnel
  - Survey instrumentation
  - Measured sound pressure levels
  - Locations of noise sources
  - Source-receiver distances
  - Calculated sound power levels
  - Distance and screening/ soft ground attenuation calculations
  - Received noise levels
  - Survey weather conditions
  - Prediction of maximum noise levels from operations in following 12-month period
  - Comment on measured sound power levels in comparison to manufacturers rated sound power levels (where stated).

### **Dust**

- 19 Operations and activities shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved Dust Action Plan (DAP), including the measures, controls and actions contained therein.
- 20 Dust and particulate matter monitoring shall be carried in strict accordance with the approved Dust Monitoring Scheme (DMS). Should any measured dust levels exceed the action levels contained therein, action will immediately be taken using all appropriate measures and controls (including suspension of activities) to reduce dust levels below the acceptance limits.

### **Soil Movement and Placement**

- 21 All topsoil or subsoil or gault clay shall be retained on the site.



- 22 The screen bunds shall be seeded to grass and the sward shall be managed until such time as the soils are required for use in the restoration of the site.
- 23 Topsoils and subsoils shall not at any time be stripped, stockpiled or used for purposes of restoration unless they are in such a dry and friable condition as to prevent compaction.
- 24 All available topsoil and subsoil should be stripped, separated and shall, wherever possible, be immediately re-spread over an area at the appropriate stage of restoration or, if immediate re-spreading is not practicable, the topsoil and subsoil should be stored separately for subsequent restoration.
- 25 The top 1 metre of the replaced overburden shall be free from large solid objects larger than 10 cm in any dimension which may damage cultivation machinery or obstruct underdrainage and is to be thoroughly ripped or deeply cultivated so that any compact layers are effectively broken up.
- 26 The subsoil is to be spread over the restoration area at an even depth above the respread overburden so as to follow the final contours. This soil is to be deeply cultivated so that any compact layers are effectively broken up.
- 27 The topsoil is to be spread over the restoration area at an even depth above the respread subsoil so as to achieve the final levels shown on final restoration plan.
- 28 The County Planning Authority shall be notified at least five working days in advance of the commencement of the final subsoil placement on each phase.

### **Landscape and Restoration**

- 29 All landscape planting shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the scheme included in this application and as detailed on Final Restoration – Figure 3.7 - Dwg. No. R01/P27/007A, Planting Plan - Dwg. No.R01/P27/011B and Woodland and Hedgerow Planting Schedule - Dwg. No.R01/P27/012.
- 30 All existing hedges, trees, saplings and shrubs along the boundaries shall be retained and protected from damage during the process of extraction and subsequent restoration. Any roots which protrude beyond the margin shall be cleanly cut and treated with an approved preservative.
- 31 All shrub planting and other landscape works pursuant to this permission shall be maintained in good healthy condition and be protected from damage in accordance with the scheme included in this application for the duration of the extraction and restoration works, and for ten years from the completion of restoration in any part of the site. During that period any trees or shrubs which die, or are severely damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next available planting season with others of a similar size and species.

### **Aftercare**

- 32 The land shall be brought to the required standard for agricultural use in accordance with the provision of the aftercare scheme forming part of the application and such detailed annual schemes as may be approved. Such detailed annual schemes shall be submitted one month prior to the annual aftercare site meeting which shall be attended by representatives of the applicant, the owner or their successors in title, and the County Planning Authority to monitor the success of the scheme. Schemes shall be submitted annually throughout the five year period of aftercare and shall provide details of; vegetation establishment, vegetation management, secondary treatments, field drainage and irrigation/watering schedule.

## REASONS

- 1 For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.
- 2&3 To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the operation so as to minimise the impact on local amenity and to ensure the prompt and effective restoration to comply with Schedule 5 paragraph 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC17.
- 4 To safeguard the environment and protect the amenities of the locality in accordance with the terms of the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policies MC3, MC8 and MC14
- 5 To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development so as to minimise disturbance and avoid nuisance to the locality, to safeguard the environment and protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the terms of the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC14; Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policy CSP15.
- 6 To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the operation so as to minimise the impact on local amenity and to ensure the prompt and effective restoration to comply with Schedule 5 paragraph 1 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC17.
- 7&8 In order that the development should not prejudice highway safety nor cause inconvenience to other road users in accordance with Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policies MC14 and MC15; Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policy CSP12.
- 9-14 To prevent the increased risk of flooding and to protect water quality in accordance with Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC14; and Policy DP21 of the Tandridge Local Plan July 2014: Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029.
- 15&16 To protect the route of the public footpaths and bridleways and the amenities of the users and comply with Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC14, Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policy CSP13 and Policy DP5 of the Tandridge Local Plan July 2014: Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029.
- 17&18 To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development so as to minimise disturbance and avoid nuisance to the locality, to safeguard the environment and protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the terms of the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC14; Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policy CSP15 and Policy DP22 of the Tandridge Local Plan July 2014: Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029.
- 19&20 To enable the County Planning Authority to exercise planning control over the development so as to minimise disturbance and avoid nuisance to the locality, to safeguard the environment and protect the amenities of local residents in accordance with the terms of the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policy MC14; Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policy CSP15 and Policy DP22 of the Tandridge Local Plan July 2014: Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029.
- 21-28 To prevent loss or damage of soil and to ensure that the land is restored to a condition capable of beneficial afteruse to comply with the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policies MC14 and MC17.
- 29-31 To secure restoration to the required standard and enhance biodiversity in accordance with the Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policies MC17 and MC18; Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policies CSP17 and CSP21.

32 To secure restoration and assist in absorbing the site back into the local landscape as soon as practical to accord with Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 Policies MC3, MC14 and MC17; and Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008 Policies CSP20 and CSP21.

**Informatives**

- 1 A watching brief should be kept during the working of the quarry for the presence of sandmartin, little ringed plover and peregrine. No works should be undertaken in any face where sand martin is active. A working distance of 20 metres should be left around a nest of little ringed plover. Should a peregrine start to nest then no works shall move closer to the nest site than have currently been taking place.
- 2 The County Planning Authority confirms that in assessing this planning application it has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way, in line with the requirements of paragraph 186-187 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.
- 3 Attention is drawn to the requirements of Sections 7 and 8A of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and to the Code of Practice for Access of the Disabled to Buildings (British Standards Institution Code of Practice BS 8300:2009) or any prescribed document replacing that code.

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**CONTACT**

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**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The deposited application documents and plans, including those amending or clarifying the proposal, responses to consultations and representations received as referred to in the report and included in the application file and the following:

**Government Guidance**

- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

**The Development Plan**

- Surrey Minerals Plan 2011 - Core Strategy, Primary Aggregates and Minerals Site Restoration Supplementary Planning Document Plan Documents (SMP2011)
- Tandridge District Core Strategy 2008
- Tandridge Local Plan Part 2, July 2014: Detailed Policies 2014 – 2029

**Other Documents**

- Planning application and decision ref.TA00/326
  - Planning application and decision ref.TA09/1533 & RE09/1876
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