NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Mancetter Quarry
Warwickshire

Planning Application

Proposed Lateral Extension to the existing quarry, creation of permanent landform features, consolidation and regularisation of existing operations and associated ancillary development
PROPOSED LATERAL EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING QUARRY, CREATION OF PERMANENT LANDFORM FEATURES, CONSOLIDATION AND REGULARISATION OF EXISTING OPERATIONS AND ASSOCIATED ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2014
INTRODUCTION

This Non-Technical Summary (NTS) forms part of the Environmental Impact Assessment that has been prepared in support of an application for planning permission by Lafarge Tarmac Trading Limited for a lateral extension to the existing quarry, creation of permanent landform features, consolidation and regularisation of existing operations and associated ancillary development at Mancetter Quarry.

The NTS is intended to summarise the likely environmental effects of the proposed development at the site in a non-technical way, for the benefit of those without a detailed knowledge of the extraction industry. The technical details and reports, which provide the basis for the NTS, are included in the Environmental Statement.

Copies of the full Environmental Statement can be obtained from David Jarvis Associates Ltd (tel: 01793 612173) or may be viewed on the Warwickshire County Council website.

WHERE IS THE SITE?

Mancetter Quarry is located near Atherstone in North Warwickshire. The Mancetter Quarry complex includes the operational quarry known as Oldbury Quarry, the restored Jubilee Quarry and the partially restored Purley Quarry, which is located across the road (Purley Chase Lane) from Oldbury Quarry and Jubilee Quarry.

The site, as outlined in red on the plan overleaf, has a combined area of approximately 96 hectares, with 73 hectares constituting the existing quarry area, and approximately 23 hectares constituting the proposed extension. Most of the site, including the operational area of Oldbury Quarry and the restored Jubilee Quarry, is located south of Purley Chase Lane. Part of the site, Purley Quarry, is located north of Purley Chase Lane. The site is accessed from Quarry Lane, which leads from the B4111/Nuneaton Road. Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) leave the site via Purley Chase Lane.

Atherstone is approximately 2km to the north of the site, Hartshill is approximately 1.6km to the south-east of the site, the village of Ridge Lane is approximately 1.3km to the west of the site and Mancetter, which is contiguous with Atherstone, is c.1.5km to the north-east.

WHO ARE THE APPLICANTS?

The application is being made by Lafarge Tarmac Trading Limited (Lafarge Tarmac) which is one of the leading producers of concrete, cement, aggregates and asphalt in the UK. The company is a joint venture formed following the merger of Lafarge UK and Tarmac. It began trading on the 7th January 2013.

Lafarge Tarmac is the UK’s leading supplier of aggregates and asphalt producing 40 million tonnes of aggregate and 7 million tonnes of asphalt per year. With more than 70 production plants and over 100 quarries nationwide, Lafarge Tarmac can supply customers across the UK quickly, cost-effectively and sustainably.

Lafarge Tarmac is also the UK’s leading supplier of innovative concrete solutions with a product range that includes over 500 different formulations, ranging from self-levelling and early strength mixes, to underwater and heat-resistant products.

Additional information can be found on the company website: http://www.lafargetarmac.com/
WHAT IS THE SITE HISTORY?

Mancetter Quarry has been in existence for in excess of 100 years. The first Ordnance Survey map in 1887 shows that quarrying took place at Mancetter at that time. There is also some evidence that small quarry pits were dug in the area at several earlier points in the past. The 1887 Ordnance Survey map also shows a tramway running from the quarry to a wharf on the Coventry Canal. Beyond the canal is the railway (now the West Coast Mainline), built in 1848, running from London to Glasgow with a spur off which subsequently allowed for the loading and transportation of quarried rock. Unusually, the quarry was used for motor racing speed trials in the 1940s and 1950s.

The site is the subject of a number of planning permissions, the most significant of which date from 2002 and 2011 and govern the general operation of the quarry and the operating hours of the site respectively.

HOW IS THE SITE CURRENTLY OPERATED?

Mineral extraction at Mancetter is undertaken by drilling, blasting, crushing and screening rock into graded aggregate sizes. Historically, rock blasted from the face has been transported by dump truck to the processing plant located within the quarry curtilage at the northern end of the quarry void, where it is tipped onto a covered surge pile and is then crushed and screened into graded aggregates. The processing plant is contained within a series of clad structures. It is proposed that the extension area would be worked using the same extraction method currently employed.

HOW WILL THE SITE BE OPERATED UNDER THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT?

The applicant proposes to operate the quarry at the same rate of output, using the same access arrangements and environmental mitigation measures and complying with the same conditions governing the current operations. The applicant does not seek to amend the current operations in any way, other than to extend the life of the quarry, by enlarging the lateral extent of the quarry.

At present, the site has a remaining life of approximately three years at an output of approximately 300,000 – 400,000 tonnes per annum. The applicant proposes to extend the quarry to the west of the site. It is anticipated that this would extend the life of the existing quarry by seven to eight years. This will ensure that the quarry can operate until 2025, as per the current permission.

The extension to the site requires the removal of soils and overburden shales, which are proposed to be utilised to create an attractive permanent landform feature to the west of the extension area.

The application also seeks to consolidate the current permissions governing this site to establish a new parent permission and regularise ancillary operations at the site.

The plan overleaf shows the block phases of the proposed development.
WHAT WILL THE OPERATING HOURS BE?

The applicant wishes to adhere to the existing operating hours which were determined by the Planning Inspectorate to be appropriate in June 2011. The operating hours are summarised below but may occasionally be varied in emergencies or if so agreed in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. In addition, they are subject to an average of no more than five loads of coated stone per hour leaving the quarry between 1200 and 1700 on Saturdays and 0600 and 1700 on Sundays.

- **Tip removal, soil stripping and overburden removal:**
  - 0800 - 1730 Mondays to Fridays
  - 0800 – 1200 Saturdays

- **Blasting operations**
  - 1000 – 1600 Mondays to Fridays
  - 1000 – 1200 Saturdays

- **Operation of the coating plant**
  - 0400 – 1730 Mondays to Fridays
  - 0400 – 1700 Saturdays
  - 0500 – 1700 Sundays

- **Vehicle movements**
  - 0600 – 1730 Mondays to Fridays
  - 0600 – 1200 Saturdays
  - 1200 – 1700 Saturdays (coated stone deliveries only)
  - 0600 – 1700 Sundays (coated stone deliveries only)

ARE THERE ANY VIABLE ALTERNATIVES TO OR LOCATIONS FOR THIS DEVELOPMENT?

If the application were not permitted, the current operations would cease within the next three years and it would no longer be possible to supply a nationally important mineral resource. This site has been in operation since the 1800s; it provides a rare and important resource for road surfacing and makes an important contribution to the local economy. The quarry also provides employment opportunities. The site is an important asset for Lafarge Tarmac.

Given that the need for such mineral resources is recognised in national and local policy, that the site has been operational for many years, that the site can be operated without significant impacts on the environment and local amenity and that the site can be adequately restored, it is submitted that it is appropriate to ensure that extraction can continue on this site, until 2025.

The location of mineral development is constrained by geology; that is, mineral can only be worked where it is found. Warwickshire County Council acknowledges that the extension of existing mineral sites can be more sustainable than the development of greenfield sites. This approach minimises the impacts of mineral extraction in the county and ensures the sustainable use of a finite resource.

Mancetter Quarry is an existing site and the necessary infrastructure is already in place. Given that mineral development is constrained by geology and that the resource at Mancetter Quarry is particularly rare, it is considered that an alternative location for mineral extraction is not a practical consideration at present.
WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON THE LOCAL WILDLIFE?

The proposed quarry extension is not designated as a protected wildlife site (i.e. as an SSSI or a Local Nature Reserve). Part of the site is included within a larger Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which encompasses the quarry and, where possible, this land has been avoided. The reasons for the designation of the LWS (e.g. birch and oak woodland, grassland and pools) have been taken into account when designing the landscaping for the restoration scheme and in particular the mix of habitats proposed for the new western landform.

The quarry development would result in the partial loss of and disturbance to land which is of relatively low value to wildlife including arable fields, improved grassland and a small part of the Purley Chase Golf Course. In addition, there would be a need to remove some lengths of hedgerow and a small area of woodland.

Surveys have been undertaken to record the presence of protected species and wildlife habitats by experienced and licensed ecologists. The surveys have focused on recording great crested newts, reptiles, breeding birds, badger and bats. The presence of all of these species/groups has been confirmed.

The findings of the wildlife surveys have been used to devise ways to avoid harm to protected species and to provide temporary alternative areas for them to be moved to whilst quarrying and earth-moving operations are underway and prior to them being reintroduced back onto the land.

The localised impacts would be more than compensated for by the creation of new habitats for wildlife made possible by the construction of the western landform and through completion of the wider quarry restoration. This includes the creation of large areas of new woodland, ponds and lowland heathland and acidic grassland where presently land of low value to wildlife occurs. These new areas will link the already restored quarries at Purley and Jubilee with land to the south and create new corridors and areas for wildlife, currently restricted to the quarry (e.g. dingy skipper butterfly), into which to expand. An emphasis has also been placed on providing better access and interpretation for the public.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed quarry development would be positive for wildlife because of the habitat creation which is proposed and the relatively low value of the land currently.

HOW WILL THE DEVELOPMENT AFFECT THE WATER ENVIRONMENT AND FLOODING?

Various reports on the water environment have been prepared by hydrological and hydrogeological specialists.

In relation to flooding, the application area falls within ‘Flood Risk Zone 1’, which has a low probability of flooding, and the various elements of the proposed development are considered to be appropriate activities for this zone (even when accounting for the assumed changes of climate change). The assessment considers there to be little potential for significant flooding of the site from rainfall running off from land next to the development. The risk posed by flooding from groundwater is also deemed manageable. The assessment also considers the risk of flooding that may be posed elsewhere within the catchment area by the development and concludes that as the rates of water being released from the proposed development will not increase above those released at present; there will be no increased risk of flooding elsewhere.

The reports have concluded that there are no overriding reasons why the proposed development should not proceed subject to a number of recommendations suggested by the hydrological specialists.
and to any other conditions which may be reasonably imposed by the planning authority to ensure the continued protection of the local water environment.

**WHAT ABOUT DUST?**

Dust is currently controlled at the site through conditions attached to the existing planning permission which required the submission of a scheme for the suppression of dust arising from quarrying activities and vehicle movements.

An additional assessment of the potential impact of dust from the proposed development has also been undertaken. This notes that there is potential for dust emissions to occur at various stages of operations but that these can generally be controlled by good practice and that, owing to good woodland screening, most nearby receptors are unlikely to be affected by dust. Nonetheless, certain additional mitigation measures are suggested in the report for specific activities, such as minimising working of soil in very dry, windy conditions, wetting down exposed surfaces and ensuring that all site haulage keeps to designated haul routes.

Even with mitigation, there remains a moderate level of risk for nuisance impacts at Quarry Farm, although this should be no different from the impact of current operations. In order to minimise this risk as much as possible, the report notes that particular care should be taken in very dry and dusty conditions to ensure that the site access road is kept as clean as possible and that vehicle speeds are kept within the 15 mph site speed limit.

**WILL I BE ABLE TO HEAR THE DEVELOPMENT?**

Quarrying operations, including the processing of mineral, have taken place on the site for some time. However, the proposed development will bring extraction operations and overburden placement closer than currently permitted operations to Delamere Fisheries, and a few dwellings on Purley Chase Lane, Ridge Lane and Oldbury Road. Consequently, a specialist noise assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact on these locations of noise from the excavation, processing and overburden activities and the movement of material within the site.

The assessment suggests particular noise limits for the specified locations based on national guidance and having regard both to the existing planning permission and current noise levels and then goes on to identify mitigation measures (principally restricting the hours of operation of certain activities) in order to reduce the potential noise impact of the proposed operations. On this basis, the report concludes that noise from the proposed operations should be rated as satisfactory at the specified locations.

The blasting regime in the proposed extension area will be similar to that used in the existing quarry which is currently controlled by conditions. Nonetheless, a specialist assessment of the environmental impact of blasting at the site has been undertaken and this has concluded that, subject to adoption of a number of recommendations (in particular, ensuring that vibration levels are restricted to a certain level), there is no reason why future blasting operations should cause any adverse impact (by way of induced vibration or annoyance) at any of the dwellings or structures in the vicinity.

**WILL THE DEVELOPMENT AFFECT THE LANDSCAPE OR ITEMS OF LOCAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL OR CULTURAL INTEREST?**

The existing quarry is a significant feature in the landscape and has been for some time.
The Environmental Statement includes a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which concludes that the proposed development is likely to cause temporary significant landscape and visual impacts on receptors in close proximity to the western landform during the initial construction period. However, the phasing of the development will help minimise the extent and length of these effects, which are not expected to last for more than 2.5 years. The completed landform will also help to link and unify the site into the local landscape character. Effects during the remaining operational life of the quarry would be either minor or neutral.

Following final restoration, the revised proposals are likely to be more beneficial than the currently permitted restoration scheme owing to increased levels of landscape enhancement and integration of the whole site within the locality.

With regards to local archaeology and cultural heritage, no designated features of cultural heritage importance lie within the proposed extension area, nor is there any evidence of any significant archaeological sites. The proposed extraction operations within the extension area may have a temporary, slightly adverse effect upon the setting of Oldbury Fort scheduled monument but this will be offset by the early restoration of the quarried area nearest to the monument, such that the overall impact could be considered to be neutral.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed development will have no significant effects either upon known archaeology or cultural heritage assets and that it therefore fully accords with both local and national cultural heritage policy.

**HOW WILL THE SITE BE ACCESSED?**

The proposed development will utilise the existing road access to the site. The current permission is subject to a legal agreement containing a vehicle routing clause. This requires all unladen Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to enter the site via Quarry Lane (from the B4111) and all HGVs to exit the quarry via Purley Chase Lane (to Pipers Lane and the B4114 Coleshill Road).

The proposed development provides for the continued extraction of mineral at the current rate of output. As a result, the proposed development will not result in any change to the current number of HGVs accessing and egressing the site.

**WILL THE DEVELOPMENT AFFECT ANY PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY?**

There are two public rights of way that fall within the proposed extension site that will be affected by the proposals, these being:

- Footpath AE108, which skirts the western boundary of the operational quarry; and
- Bridleway AE109 which is located west of the operational quarry.

Bridleway AE109 will be temporarily diverted to the south-western edge of the application boundary during the construction period and then repositioned to a similar alignment as the existing route.

Footpath AE108 will be relocated on a new route at the edge of the extraction site, providing views of the restored quarry and the wider landscape.

There will also be created approximately 854 additional linear metres of permissive public access on land within the quarry boundary, including a circular route around the perimeter of Oldbury Quarry.
This will link into the surrounding footpath network which is associated with Hartshill Hayes Country Park, the panoramic viewpoint associated with Oldbury Camp and the site of Hartshill Castle.

The result will be a new network of paths and circular routes linking Atherstone, Mancetter, Oldbury and Hartshill Green together as well as linking to the long distance footpath of Centenary Way.

HOW WILL THE SITE BE RESTORED?

The proposed development enables the consideration of a revised and enhanced, landscape scale restoration proposal for the site. The proposed concept for the final restoration of the site is detailed on the plan shown overleaf.

The aims of the proposed restoration are:

- To establish a landform together with land use features and elements capable of integration and enhancement of the local landscape character and its wider setting;
- To increase local amenity use and value of the site and make connections into the local footpath/bridleway network;
- To create new wildlife habitats throughout the site that can be sustainably managed and maintained to promote and increase the potential for biodiversity; and
- To return land back to productive agricultural use.

The proposed restoration is similar to the permitted scheme with a wildlife enhanced landscape, water bodies, shallows, heathland and tree / shrub planting and a wildlife enhanced agricultural landscape in Purley Quarry. The main difference between the permitted and proposed restoration schemes is the larger area of land with the new proposals including a new western landform. The land, which is currently being used as agricultural grazing land, would be remodelled to create a ridge with similar gradients to the existing landform and a combination of grazing land and biodiversity enhancement which includes a combination of acid grassland and heathland creation.

There are two other main changes between the permitted restoration scheme and the proposed, and these are a larger lake feature within the quarried void and a change in existing public rights of way. The proposed lake will still have associated shallows and the same water management system as the permitted scheme.

Following final restoration, the revised proposals are likely to be more beneficial, when compared to the currently permitted restoration scheme, due to the increased levels of landscape enhancement and integration of the whole site within the locality. Beneficial effects are also achieved through an increase in visual quality; an increase in public amenity, as greater public access is provided; and, enhanced wildlife potential as new habitats are created and managed.
CONCLUSIONS

The applicant proposes to operate the quarry at the same rate of output, using the same access arrangements and environmental mitigation measures and principally complying with the same conditions governing the current operations. The applicant does not seek to amend the current operations in any way, other than to extend the life of the quarry, by enlarging the lateral extent of the quarry.

The applicant proposes to extend the quarry to the west of the site. It is anticipated that this would extend the life of the existing quarry by seven to eight years. This will ensure that the quarry can operate until 2025, as per the current permission.

The Environmental Statement and accompanying technical reports show that the proposed development would not result in significant adverse impacts on the environment. The applicant proposes to adhere to conditions which control noise, dust and other matters to ensure that the impact of the development is minimised.

Consequently, it is considered that any potential effects of the proposed development on the local community and on the quality of the surrounding environment, resulting from the extraction and processing of mineral, will be kept to a minimum.

Following final restoration, the revised proposals are likely to be more beneficial, when compared to the currently permitted restoration scheme.