BUILT HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

BRINKLOW QUARRY
BRINKLOW
WARWICKSHIRE

DECEMBER 2015
1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Built Heritage Briefing note has been prepared by CgMs on behalf of Brinklow Quarry Ltd in relation to the renewal of the allocation in the Warwickshire Minerals Plan of the currently consented Brinklow Quarry (hereafter ‘the Site’), and the extension of the area of this allocation to the north of the currently allocated and consented workings. The existing consent dates from 1991 (R687/1547/1486/P) and includes no conditions relating to built heritage issues. The Warwickshire Minerals Core Strategy Spatial Option from 2007 refers directly to the Site when noting that ‘Archaeological features and historic buildings – none identified and no historical evidence from other operations’.

1.2 In the preparation of this note, Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) have been consulted and a map regression exercise undertaken. A Site visit was undertaken on 1st December, 2015. Weather conditions were clear and afforded good visibility of the Site and its surroundings.

1.3 In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 126 of the National Planning Policy Framework, planning authorities, including when formulating their local plans, should employ a positive strategy for the conservation of the historic environment, taking into account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets. In accordance with paragraph 128, applicants for planning permission are required to describe the significance of affected assets and the level of impact on significance brought about by proposals.

1.4 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets and that the greater the significance of the asset, the greater this weight should be. Further it states that ‘substantial harm’ to a Grade II listed building should be exceptional and that ‘substantial harm’ to designated assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments and Grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.

2.0 Built Heritage Introduction

2.1 The Site lies in the vicinity of a number of listed buildings, a conservation area, a Registered Park and Garden and two scheduled monuments. For the purposes of this note the Grade I, II* and Grade II listed buildings, which form the core of Coombe Abbey Hotel, will be treated as a group. A number of listed buildings and the scheduled monument situated within the Registered Park and Garden are discounted from this note since they have no intervisibility with the Site, due to distance, orientation, topography and tree screening, and will not be impacted by its development.

2.2 This note considers the following heritage assets which have been identified as having the potential to face an impact by development of the Site following allocation as a mineral extraction site:
Combe Abbey – Grade I (NHL 1233485), together with associated buildings (listed in Appendix A)
Combe Abbey Registered Park and Garden – Grade II* (NHL1000408)
Woodhill Farmhouse – Grade II (NHL 1276547)
East Lodge – Grade II (NHL 1233489)
Brinklow Castle (NHL 1011368)
Brinklow Conservation Area

3.0 **Built Heritage Assessment**

3.1 **Combe Abbey** The significance of this Grade I listed building and its associated structures lies in the historic and architectural special interest embodied in the fabric of the buildings and its position within its setting, the wholly associated designed landscape of the Registered Park and Garden. The core of the building dates from the twelfth century, with alterations and additions spanning from the thirteenth through to the nineteenth century. It is, therefore, an important record of the development of architectural styles, building typology and practices, material usage and, together with the Registered Park and Garden, demonstrates the evolution the relationship of House and Garden in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

3.2 The setting of the collective built assets is the Registered Park and Garden in which they are situated. The landscaping of the park includes the heavy use of individual planting and of groups of planting as landscape features to demark designed areas and to form designed views. Consequently, the house and associated buildings are surrounded by individual mature trees in parkland, tree avenues, belts of trees and thick clumps of woodland. As a result the house etc. are largely screened from the immediate grounds (Plate 1), other than in the contrived views to the east, west and particularly the south. Furthermore, this group of assets is so thoroughly screened from the Site by the dense, continuous belts of mature trees along the south-eastern boundary of the wider park, such that there is no direct intervisiblility or hardly even sequential views (Plate 2).

3.3 The main drive and view directly south of the house continues as Twelve O’Clock Ride to the south of Coventry Road. The Site is to the east of this and largely beyond Brinklow Wood, with the land gently dropping. The Site does not impact this key element of setting in the house and park, as experienced from the asset and along this main north-south designed view (Plate 3).

3.3 **Combe Abbey Registered Park and Garden** As stated above, the significance of this asset is the strictly contrived landscape design forming a setting and a pleasure ground for Combe Abbey itself. Important views identified in the listing are to the north, northeast and to the west. The value of the association with garden designer Capability Brown features highly in the significance of the asset. The avenue extending south through the garden and into Brinklow Wood is also identified as a historic key view.

3.4 Whilst the Site is screened from the majority of the Registered Park and Garden by the tree belt to the southwest, its western extremity is experienced in some limited sequential views available from the bridleway (Plate 4), and has the
potential to cause minor harm to this element of the assets’ setting. This harm can be mitigated by the strengthening of the existing hedgerow boundary with further planting and the creation of bunds.

3.5 **Woodhill Farmhouse** The significance of this asset resides predominantly in the historic and architectural special interest of the building’s fabric, which dates from the eighteenth century. The ancillary buildings which form the courtyard of the farm to the south of the listed building date from the nineteenth century and are likely to be curtilage listed. They provide a substantial positive contribution to the asset’s significance as part of its immediate setting, but also substantially screen the asset in views from the south. The open fields to the south of the farmstead within the proposed extension of the Quarry make up a portion of the asset's extended setting. This offers a functional association with the farm and provides an open, rural agricultural landscape as the extended setting. This forms a positive contribution to the asset’s significance, but is secondary to the contribution of the immediate setting, the functional and group value with the ancillary buildings and to the primary contributor of the farmhouse’s special architectural and historic interest.

3.6 The HER records evidence of widespread, if localised, historic gravel and sand excavation in the area, and Brinklow Quarry is already experienced within the extended setting of this asset (Plate 5), which otherwise consists of open agricultural field parcels. The extension of the Site will bring its boundary closer to the asset, and will lead to the erosion of the farmstead’s rural and agricultural setting in its southern quarter (Plate 6). The minor harm presented to the setting of the asset will be minimised by the retention and strengthening of existing hedgerow, and may be further reduced by the provision of bunds and screening along the new boundary.

3.7 **East Lodge** This asset dates from the late eighteenth century and forms one of the three entrances to the estate. Its significance lies in the historic and architectural special interest of its building fabric and its associative and group value with the estate’s other designated assets and the Registered Park and Garden. Its significance has been, to a degree compromised by its conversion to a separate residential building and the blocking of the historic access way to the Abbey.

3.8 The Lodge is experienced from the east of the Site as very limited glimpsed views of the twentieth-century extension to the south flanking elevation and sections of roofline (Plate 7). The asset is oriented facing toward the park to the northwest, and is screened from the roadside by heavy planting to the southeast (Plate 8). It is possible that very limited views of the Quarry might be available from the first floor of the asset, but the proposals will not alter the character of these views, with the extended boundary largely unperceived from the asset.

3.9 **Brinklow Castle** This scheduled monument is a motte and bailey castle dating from the eleventh century and is scheduled for its historic importance, rarity and high level of preservation. Occupying an important strategic position on the Fosse Way, the asset is associated with the campaigns of William the Conqueror, and its
early abandonment and lack of development ensure the survival of undisturbed archaeology.

3.10 Wide ranging 360 degree views are available from the castle mound, and glimpsed views of Brinklow Quarry are available within a limited portion of these views (Plate 9). The presence of woodland, and mature trees within hedgerow planting, obscures sections of these views. The Castle is not experienced in views from or across the Site, nor within sequential views. The extension of the Quarry would not significantly alter the way Castle’s extended setting is perceived from the high point of the monument itself.

3.11 Brinklow Conservation Area The historic core of the village, and the scheduled monument of the motte and bailey castle, form the designated area of Brinklow. Within the Conservation Area Appraisal it is noted that it is an inward-looking Area, focusing largely on historic development along Lutterworth Road and that the rural surroundings of the area are not readily appreciable from within the Conservation Area (Plate 10). The principal reason for designation is the character of the historic buildings, derived largely from their architectural special interest, and the Site does not impact on this aspect at all. The current workings of the Site and its proposed extension will have no impact on the significance of the Conservation Area.

4.0 Conclusions/areas of sensitivity/advice

4.1 It has been identified that the proposed Site has the potential to have an impact on the significance of the Registered Park and Garden. This is by virtue of a portion of the Site forming a part of the asset’s extended setting. The degree of this impact will be less than substantial harm, specifically of a minor level.

4.2 It has also been identified that the proposal has the potential to have an impact on the significance of Woodhill Farmhouse. The degree of this impact will be less than substantial, specifically a minor level of harm by virtue of the Site being located in part of its extended setting. In both instances, any identified harm can be reduced by the careful management of boundary treatments and siting of access routes. It is recognised that the development represents only temporary harm to the wider settings of the affected assets, as upon completion of works, reinstatement of altered landscape features will be undertaken, as has been agreed within the previous planning permission. No archaeological or built heritage assets have been identified within the Site itself, and all identified impacts are indirect, through change within assets’ settings.

Emma Heeks
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2nd December 2015
APPENDIX A

Tennis Court at Combe Abbey (NHL 1233658) Grade II*

Combe Abbey, 2 Cottages and Outbuilding approximately 30 metres from North Front (NHL 1276598) Grade II

Combe Abbey, Stableblock approximately 40 metres north east of Abbey (NHL 1276600) Grade II

Kitchen Garden and associated Bothies and Gardeners Cottage 130 metres north east of Combe Abbey (NHL1389393) Grade II

Combe Abbey, Garden Wall extending from 40 metres north west of Front to Garden Steps (NHL 1233487) Grade II

Garden Wall to south and west of Stableblock, Combe Abbey (NHL 1276491) Grade II

Combe Abbey, West Gatepier approximately a quarter of a mile south (NHL1276599) Grade II

Combe Abbey, East Gatepier approximately a quarter of a mile south (NHL 1233488) Grade II
Plate 1: Screening of Coombe Abbey from within immediate grounds

Plate 2: Screening of Park Boundary to the south-east (Left hand side in picture)
Plate 3: View along drive from Combe Abbey (looking south)

Plate 4: View of western site boundary from the Bridleway
Plate 5: Woodhill Farmhouse viewed from the north, with existing quarry visible in its setting (to the left of the farmhouse)

Plate 6: Woodhill Farmhouse viewed from the Site
Plate 7: East Lodge viewed from eastern area of the Site

Plate 8: East Lodge viewed from south of Coventry Road
Plate 9: Quarry viewed from Brinklow Castle Mound (at c. 30x magnification)

Plate 10: Brinklow Conservation Area, looking north along the Lutterworth Road