PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE REMOVAL OF RETAINED MINERAL FACE TO ALLOW FOR MORE EFFICIENT OPERATION OF EXTRACTION AND RESTORATION PHASES, INCLUDING AMENDMENTS TO THE HEIGHTS OF THE PERIMETER BUNDS AND SMALL EXTENSION TO THE RECYCLING AREA

HARLESTONE QUARRY, HARLESTONE ROAD, HARLESTONE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, NN6 7QA

BARTON PLANT LIMITED

Version 1

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OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement is submitted to Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) on behalf of Barton Plant Ltd and relates to removal of the retained mineral face in order to allow for more efficient operation of extraction and restoration phases at Harlestone Quarry. The application also seeks permission for the amendments to the heights of the perimeter bund around phase 4 and restoration phase 2 and a small extension to the recycling area.

1.1.2 Conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4 of planning permission 13/00109/MINNMA are the main controlling conditions with respect to the operation of Harlestone Quarry. These conditions sit in conjunction with the relevant conditions of Planning Permission 08/00037/MIN. They set out the approach to working the quarry, identifying a set of phasing drawings, restrictions regarding the perimeter bunds, access for plant for bund maintenance and the location of the mineral processing plant.

1.1.3 It is proposed to vary conditions 1 and 4 of permission 13/00109/MINNMA to reflect the required changes to operations at the Quarry.

1.2 Application Documents

1.2.1 A range of supporting documents are provided in relation to this planning application. They are:

- Planning Application Form
- Planning Statement
- Noise Assessment
- GPP/BP/HA/15/04 Revised Phase 4
- GPP/BP/HA/15/05 Revised Phase 5
- GPP/BP/HA/15/06 Revised Phase 6

1.3 Planning History

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted in 1981 for the extraction of sandstone and infilling with inert waste at the original site. In 1994 permission was granted for an extension in time and in 2000 a further permission was granted for an extension in time, ref DA/00/617C. Restoration of this site was expected to be complete by 2009, although tree planting is still being finalised. Permission was granted in June 2002 to extend the quarry and landfill operations in a southerly direction as far as the Round Oak Plantation, ref DA/01/1255C. A related planning permission was granted in May 2002 for the establishment of an area for recycling of inert waste to produce recycled aggregates, ref DA/01/1254C.

1.3.2 Planning permission DA/05/876C was granted in 2006 for the extension of Harlestone Stone Quarry allowing the extension of working to the north of the original Quarry. Planning permission 08/00037/MIN was granted in 2008 and varied conditions 11 and 12 of planning permission DA/05/876C. This permitted a revised approach to the phasing of the extraction and restoration operations in the Quarry extension. Non Material Amendment permission
13/00109/MINNMA was granted in 2013, granting planning permission to increase screening bund heights and revised phasing for working and restoration.

1.4 Terminology

**Retained Mineral Face**

1.4.1 The retained mineral face was retained as a screen for noise and visual purposes. It sits at the southern end of phase 4 (originally the northern boundary of Phase 1) protruding eastwards into the quarry. Until recently, the Terex Finlay 663 SuperTrak 3-way screen has been located on the southern side of the face. The face comprises building stone and aggregates that can be supplied to market.

**Working Mineral Face**

1.4.2 The working mineral face is currently at the northern end of phase 4. This is where mineral is currently extracted prior to processing and supply to market. The working mineral face sits to the north of the retained mineral face.

1.5 The Site and Its Surrounding Context

1.5.1 The site is located to the south east of Harlestone village, Northamptonshire. The centre of Harlestone is approximately 1 km to the north west of the site and the centre of Northampton lies 4 km to the southeast. Access to the site is from the A428 trunk road that runs to the east of the site.

1.5.2 The closest residential properties to the site are isolated buildings at Heath Gates 70 m to the east and ‘The Quarries’ 300 m to the northwest. The closest commercial property is a garden centre 100 m to the south. The site is bounded by arable farmland to the north and west. To the south lies the Round Oak Coniferous Plantation and to the east is Harlestone Heath, an area of scrub and coniferous trees.
2 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

2.1 The Development

2.1.1 Currently, there is a requirement for the retention of the mineral face that sits to the south of working Phase 4, as shown on drawings GPP/BP/HA/13/04 Site Phasing Plan Revised Phase 4, GPP/BP/HA/13/05 Site Phasing Plan Revised Phase 5 and GPP/BP/HA/13/06 Site Phasing Plan Revised Phase 6 as permitted by planning permission 13/00109/MINNMA. The mineral face has been retained as a screen for noise and visual purposes, mainly in relation to the residential properties to the north of the quarry. According to the detail of the planning permission, the mineral screening plant should be located behind the retained mineral bund at all times.

2.1.2 The arrangement, as permitted and operated by Barton Plant, is creating a bottle neck in the working arrangements as vehicles gain access to the phase 4 working phase between the eastern edge of the retained mineral bund and the western side of the restored phase 2. The bottle neck restricts access to phase 4 making it difficult to operate the quarry effectively due to conflict between vehicles and plant equipment tracking between the working face, the processing area and the designated recycling area to the south.

2.1.3 Therefore, it is proposed to remove the retained mineral face to allow easier access to the working face beyond. The removal of the retained mineral face will allow the processing plant to follow the working face as the quarry workings progress through phase 4. The ability to locate the processing plant in proximity to the working face of the quarry will make material handling more efficient as vehicle tracking will be reduced between extraction and processing. The processing plant will remain on the quarry floor.

2.1.4 The proposed working arrangements are shown on drawings:

- GPP/BP/HA/15/04 Site Phasing Plan – Revised Phase 4
- GPP/BP/HA/15/05 Site Phasing Plan – Revised Phase 5
- GPP/BP/HA/15/06 Site Phasing Plan – Revised Phase 6

2.1.5 The operation of the processing plant in proximity to the working face, is already underway. This element of the works commenced in February 2015. Retrospective planning permission is therefore required.

2.1.6 As per condition 2 of planning permission 13/00109/MINNMA the perimeter bunds around the working and restoration area should be constructed to a height of 6m. This element has not yet been constructed, and it is the intention not to increase the height of the existing perimeter bunds to the 6m height. It is considered that sufficient noise attenuation can be achieved through retaining the current 5m height along the western and northern sides of phase 4, with the bund to the east of phase 4 along the northern perimeter of restoration phase 2 remaining at 3m in height.

2.1.7 The perimeter bunds will remain in place until the operations have progressed as far as phase 6. Phase 6 is a restoration phase, as shown on drawing GPP/BP/HA/15/06 Site Phasing Plan – Revised Phase 6. It is proposed to construct a smaller perimeter bund around the remaining area of quarry left to be restored. The bund will be mostly 5m in height, constructed in a U-shape around the remaining void. The exception to this is a 3m bund located along the south western side.
2.1.8 There will be the occasional requirement to operate a crusher on site. It is proposed that the crusher will be located in the recycling area to the south of the phase 4. 6m bunds will be constructed around the recycling area to provide noise attenuation with respects to the crushing operations. These bunds will be constructed prior to the operation of the crusher.

2.1.9 This application includes a small extension to the recycling area, to the northeast, allowing room for the operation of the crusher. Oversize stone, unsuitable for recovery as building stone but too big to supply to the aggregate market, will be taken to the recycling area and stockpiled pending crushing.

2.2 Proposed Wording of Planning Conditions

2.2.1 It is proposed to vary conditions 1 and 4 of planning permission 13/00109/MINNMA to reflect the development proposals. The suggested changes are set out below with the original wording struck out to show the proposed change from the consented wording with additions in blue:

Condition 1

Except where modified by this schedule of conditions the development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents:

Application Form dated 18 November 2013
Application Form dated ....February 2015
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/13/04 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 4
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/15/04 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 4
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/13/05 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 5
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/15/05 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 5
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/13/06 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 6
Drawing GPP/BP/HA/15/06 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 6

Condition 4

The minerals processing plant shall be set down below original ground levels and located and retained on the south side of "Minerals Face Retained for Noise and Visual Screening of the Processing Area" as indicated on submitted Drawing GPP/BP/HA/13/05/Rev 1, and the crusher shall be located within the recycling area as shown on drawing GPP/BP/HA/15/04 Rev 1. Site Phasing Plan — Revised Phase 4.
3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 This chapter provides an indication of the main Development Plan policies and national planning guidance that has been considered and assessed in the preparation of this planning application.

3.1.2 The Development Plan in this instance consists of:

- Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (October 2014)

3.1.3 The main objectives and planning policies that are relevant to the proposal are set out below.

3.2 The Development Plan

**Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (October 2014)**

3.2.1 The Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (NMWLP) was adopted in October 2014.

3.2.2 In terms of the development plan it is considered that Harlestone Quarry's contribution to the strategic requirements of the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (October 2014) will continue.

3.2.3 The original reason for retaining the mineral face at Harlestone Quarry was to provide noise and visual attenuation to residential receptors to the north. Compliance with the relevant policies of the Waste Local Plan relating to noise and visual enmity will therefore be the focus of this application.

3.2.4 In this case, policy 22 is most relevant. The policy is detailed below:

*Policy 22: Addressing the impact of proposed minerals and waste development:*

'Proposals for minerals and waste development must demonstrate that the following matters have been considered and addressed:

- Protecting Northamptonshire’s natural resources and key environmental designations (including heritage assets);
- Avoiding and / or minimising potentially adverse impacts to an acceptable level, specifically addressing air emissions (including dust), odour, bioaerosols, noise and vibration, slope stability, vermin and pests, birdstrike, litter, land use conflict and cumulative impact;
- Impacts on flood risk as well as the flow and quantity of surface and groundwater;
- Ensuring built development is of a design and layout that has regard to its visual appearance in the context of the defining characteristics of the local area;
- Ensuring access is sustainable, safe and environmentally acceptable, and
- Ensuring that local amenity is protected.'
4 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Potential Noise Impact

4.1.1 Planning policy 22 of the NMWLP requires that mineral development should ‘avoid and/or minimise adverse impacts to an acceptable level, specifically addressing noise’. Harlestone Quarry currently operates to noise limits set by condition 10 of planning permission 08/00037/MIN. The condition limits noise levels at identified noise sensitive properties. The limits are:

> The noise levels at noise sensitive properties shall not exceed 45 dB(A) LAeq 1 hour (free field) at the Quarries and 55 dB(A) LAeq (free field) at the Lodge and 51 Rugby Road during working hours, other than those during initial stripping and bund formation which shall be greater than 70 dB(A) LAeq 1 hour (free field).

4.1.2 A noise assessment (Appendix 1) of the proposed changes has been undertaken to assess the potential noise impact of the future development and to ultimately determine the acceptability, in noise terms, of those changes.

4.1.3 Noise monitoring was undertaken at the Quarries to re-establish and update background noise levels. The background noise monitoring was undertaken at two separate 15 minute periods when the Quarry operations had been stood down. It was established that background noise levels were 3 dB(A) higher than the levels measured when the previous planning consent was granted. This is considered attributable to increases in road traffic flows on the surrounding roads over the past 10+ years.

4.1.4 For the Quarries property the background noise levels are now 38 dB(A) and 41 dB(A).

4.1.5 Noise monitoring was then undertaken at both the Quarries and 51 Rugby road properties when the site was operational and the processing plant operating beside the working mineral face.

4.1.6 Noise calculations of the noise levels for the development have been made using the methodology presented in BS 5228-1. At the Quarries the calculations indicate, with the processing plant located within the extraction area and crusher located within the recycling area, that noise levels would remain below the 45 dB L_{Aeq, 1 hour} limit at this property.

4.1.7 Noise levels associated with the temporary operations, which will principally comprise the removal / reconstruction of bunds, are anticipated to be between 47 – 53 dB L_{Aeq, 1 hour}, substantially below the temporary working limit of 70 dB L_{Aeq, 1 hour}.

4.1.8 For 51 Rugby Road, the calculations indicate that noise levels at this property would remain below the normal working limit of 55 dB L_{Aeq, 1 hour}. The current noise mitigation measures are sufficient to maintain an acceptable noise environment at this property, with no additional measures required.

4.1.9 On the basis of the above, it is considered that there is no longer a need to increase the perimeter bund heights to a height of 6m as required by planning permission 13/00109/MINNMA as the current perimeter bund arrangements are sufficient to limit noise levels experienced at sensitive residential receptors to an acceptable level. This approach also
reduces the amount of time that the Quarry operations will need to utilise the temporary noise limit level of 75 dBA through removing the need to increase the perimeter bund heights.

4.1.10 The noise assessment of the varied arrangements indicates that the limits set out by condition 10 of planning permission 08/00037/MIN can be met. It is therefore considered that the planning condition should remain as worded by planning permission 08/00037/MIN.

4.1.11 On the basis that the current limits can be met it is considered that there will be no adverse impact in noise terms resulting from the varied site operations and the development is therefore compliant with planning policy 22 of the NMWLP.

4.2 Potential Visual Impact

4.2.1 Planning policy 22 of the NMWLP requires that mineral development ‘is of a design and layout that has regard to its visual appearance in the context of the defining characteristics of the local area’.

4.2.2 The retained mineral face was in place to provide visual screening of the mineral working from the closest residential receptors to the north and north east. One of the justifications for increasing the perimeter bund heights to 6m as permitted by planning permission 13/00109/MINM was to provide further visual screening. The rearrangement of the quarry operations will take away these elements of visual screening.

4.2.3 The quarry plant will be operational in the bottom of the quarry, at depth. Views into the quarry are minimised by perimeter bunds along the western, northern and north eastern sides of the extraction and restoration area. The bunds are 5m along the western and northern perimeter of the extraction area and 3m along the north eastern perimeter.

4.2.4 Furthermore, there is a thick belt of mature trees located along the eastern side of the Quarry, between the perimeter bunds and the A428 (Rugby Road). Similarly, this is the case to the north of the extraction area where mature trees line the edge of the lane which connects the A428 with Harlestone Village.

4.2.5 Further bunds will be constructed around the recycling area for noise attenuation purposes when operating the crusher. These bunds will be 6m in height and will provide further visual screening of the operations carried out in the recycling area.

4.2.6 On the basis of the above, it is considered that there will not be an adverse visual impact generated by removing the retained mineral bund. The operations will be sufficiently screened in visual terms and is therefore compliant with the specific requirements of policy 22.
5 CONCLUSION

5.1.1 This planning application has been submitted to gain planning permission for the removal of the retained mineral face at the southern end of phase 4, to gain authorisation for the rearrangement of perimeter bund heights and a small extension to the recycling area to accommodate the working arrangements associated with the crusher.

5.1.2 The rearrangements are required to allow the quarry to operate more efficiently through the removal of a bottle neck where plant and machinery gain access to the working area of the quarry between the retained mineral face and the restored area of the quarry; to the east of the retained mineral face.

5.1.3 An element of what is being applied for has already commenced. This is the operation of the Terex Finlay 663 SuperTrak 3-way screen in proximity to the working mineral face; away from its permitted location on the southern side of the retained mineral bund. The current operation of the processing screen in front of the retained mineral bund has enabled a robust assessment of the noise to be undertaken. The assessment has shown that the quarry can be operated in this manner without generating an adverse impact in environmental terms. Retrospective authorisation is required for this element of the development.

5.1.4 Sufficient screening is already provided to prevent adverse visual impacts that are potentially generated through removing the retained mineral bund and not increasing the perimeter bund heights to 6m.

5.1.5 The relocation of the occasional use of the crusher to the recycling area will ensure that there will be no adverse noise or visual impacts from its operation.

5.1.6 It has been shown that the proposed development can be carried out in an environmentally acceptable manner. This complies with the requirements of planning policy 22 which is the main policy with regards to the control of the environmental impacts of mineral developments.
APPENDIX 1: Noise Assessment