

**Poyle Quarry
Lands West of Colne Brooke, Slough**



**Environmental Statement
Non-Technical Summary
August 2025**

Planning Application for the winning and working of minerals (Sand and Gravel) comprising of two minor extensions, with progressive restoration via infilling with inert waste

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Statement (ES) accompanies a planning application submitted to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) on behalf of Summerleaze Ltd. for the for the phased winning and working of mineral (sand and gravel) in the form two minor extensions at Poyle Quarry. The proposals seek to restore the lands to agricultural use in the same manner as permitted at the existing quarry, via the importation and deposit of inert material.

The proposed development will integrate with the approved quarry phasing for the quarry, resulting in an additional two phases of extraction and infilling.

The two parcels of land are allocated for sand and gravel extraction in the Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan (November 2022) ('JMWP') under Allocation Reference MA 2.

The Application Site is comprised of two separate parcels of land (shown edged in red) to the East and South of the existing quarry (shown edged in green), as shown at Figure 1.1 overleaf. The parcel of land to the East of the existing quarry is approximately 4 hectares (ha) in size, whilst the parcel to the South is 2ha in size. Both parcels are currently in use as arable fields.

The Application Site lies to the South of the settlement of Colnbrook and North East of the settlement of Horton. Heathrow Airport lies c. 3km to the South East of the Site. In addition to the existing quarry, there are a number of other sand and gravel extraction sites in the surrounding area.

The ES considers the environmental aspects within and around the proposed development project, which potentially could experience impacts as a result of the proposal.

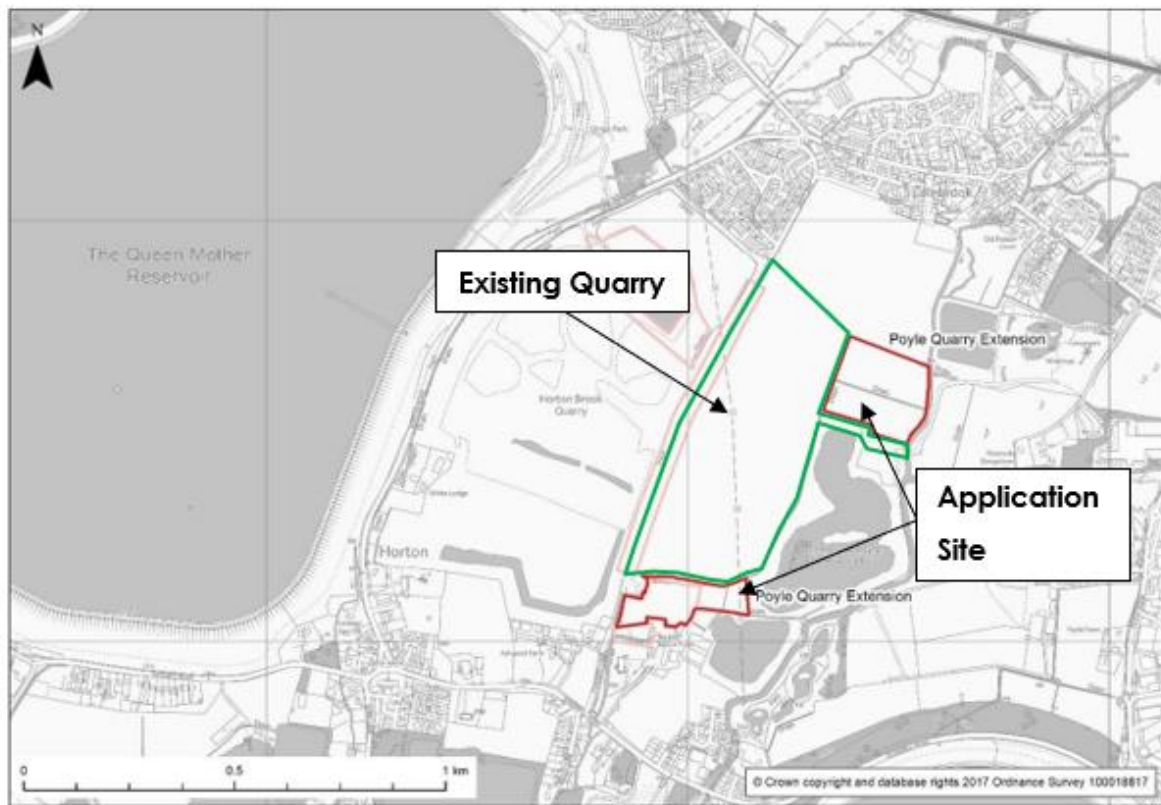


Figure 1.1 Application Site Location

Planning permission for the development of the existing quarry for sand and gravel extraction together with restoration to original ground levels was originally approved in 2008 under reference 04/01716. This permission was renewed in 2011 under reference 10/02804. Due to the last permission not being implemented by January 2016 it lapsed, hence the reason for the most recent application in 2017. The consented development matches that previously approved in 2008 and 2011. Works have been ongoing at the existing quarry since 2024.

In parallel with the permission for mineral extraction at the quarry, planning permission was granted by Slough BC under Ref P/10012/008 for the construction of the alternative access road to the processing plant with the eventual removal of the plant and restoration of the site once mineral extraction and infilling within the existing quarry are completed.

SCOPE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Separate reports have been prepared for each of the significant elements of the ES by experts. Each report considers the following:

- baseline study;
- identifying potential impacts
- predicting and evaluating the magnitude and significance of those impacts;
- proposing mitigation measures, where necessary.

The remit of an ES is to consider all environmental aspects, which could experience impact from the proposed development, from which the identification of mitigation measures can be undertaken. The purpose of the mitigation measures is to ensure that the development could be undertaken without creating any significant or unacceptable adverse impacts on the environment or amenity of the area going forward.

Given the limited size and scale of the project site and its proximity to the existing quarry, which has been the subject of a number of EIA's, the most recent of which is from 2019, the proposed development is not considered likely to result in significant effects for all those aspects required to be covered under the EIA Regulations. Having examined the project and the surrounding environs and based on the experience of the project team, the following topics have been selected for in-depth study:

- Water Environment;
- Noise;
- Biodiversity;
- Landscape and Visual; and

- Cultural Heritage.

For each of these topics, competent professionals have been appointed to prepare specialist reports in respect of their technical area of expertise. All external consultants have been appointed and project managed by Quarryplan. The specialist reports, held within the Appendices of the ES, have been reviewed and summarised by the authors in the main ES Report for ease of reading.

The coordination of the competent experts and the production of this EIA has been managed by Chris Tinsley BA (Hons), DipTP, MRTPI of Quarryplan Limited, who has a proven track record of managing EIA development projects, with specialist expertise in the area of minerals and waste. In addition, each of the contributors to the ES are also considered experts in their chosen fields.

The specialist reports include assessments of baseline conditions; existing and potential impacts; the magnitude and significance of those impacts and proposed mitigation measures, where necessary. This approach is considered to be compliant with the national legislation with respect to EIA.

ALTERNATIVES

It is incumbent upon the assessment to consider alternative locations for the development. The EIA considers a number of alternatives to the proposed project including the 'Do-Nothing' Alternative; alternative sources of aggregates; alternative locations; alternative design elements and alternative processes. Having considered all of the reasonable alternatives, the proposed development is considered to be the best practical environmental option.

PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals & Waste Plan (JMWP) (2022) JMWP identifies the site as being allocated for sand and gravel extraction. The principle of development is therefore considered acceptable. Appendix A of the JMWP lists a number of development considerations. Each of these have been taken in to consideration in the preparation of the ES.

The Site is located within a Green Belt designation. The proposed development includes the erection of earthen screening bunds. This, in combination with the short term nature of the proposed works, the fact the site will be totally remediated by restoring it back to agricultural lands and that it will result in no intensification over and above the levels of traffic previously permitted at the existing quarry and demonstrates that it's reasonable to conclude that the proposed development would not impact the openness of the Green Belt.

The proposed development site will be restored to agricultural use using inert waste therefore would permanently avoiding the site being the subject of built development in the future, which by its nature would impact the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed development would therefore restricting urban sprawl and encroachment and preventing towns from merging together. It would not affect the setting of any historic towns and would assist urban regeneration elsewhere by avoiding the site being the subject of built development.

Policy W4 of the JMWP relates to locations and sites for waste management. The policy references preferred waste areas and sites. The Application Site is not any of the listed sites, however part C of the policy provides a list of criteria where waste management can be accommodated. One such

criteria is “Is part of an active quarry or active landfill operation”. Given that the proposals are for the infilling of lands which have been quarried, the proposed development accords with this criterion. As described above, with its location and good highway access, the Site is well placed to serve the local construction market for inert wastes.

Given the above, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of the JMWP.

Section 3 of the ES considers the proposals in light of policies contained within the RBWM Borough Local Plan 2013 – 2033; the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2025; and the National Planning Policy for Waste (2014).

It is considered that the proposed development will accord with the policies contained within the above and would meet the economic, social, and environmental objectives of the NPPF.

Given the same, in accordance with paragraph 224 of the NPPF, the benefits of the mineral extraction resultant from the proposed development should therefore be afforded **great weight** in the determination of the planning application.

SITE LOCATION AND PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Application Site is comprised of two separate parcels of land to the East and South of the existing quarry, as detailed earlier. The two parcels of land are allocated for sand and gravel extraction in the JMWP under Allocation Reference MA 2.

The parcel of land to the East of the existing quarry is approximately 4 hectares (ha) in size, whilst the parcel to the South is 2ha in size. Both parcels are currently in use as arable fields.

The proposed development seeks to win and work the sand and gravel mineral resource which has been identified at the site, in the form two minor extensions to the existing quarry which was granted planning permission for extraction and infilling in 2019, allowing for best use of the finite sand and gravel resource to be made, before being infilled with inert waste and restored to agricultural use.

The proposed development will integrate with the approved quarry phasing for the quarry, resulting in an additional two phases of extraction and infilling. There are no proposals to alter the method of working, depth of extraction, operational hours or permitted level of output from that consented at the existing quarry. The restoration proposals also match those previously permitted.

The working and restoration schemes have been designed to ensure that the exposed area of extraction at any one time is minimised, and that following the completion of the operations, the land can be returned to agricultural land of no less quality than exists at present and suitable for arable use.

As shown on the Proposed development drawings, it is proposed that the southern parcel of the Application Site would constitute Phase 6 of operations with the eastern parcel comprising Phase 7, the final phase of extraction.

The proposed development will be undertaken across four main stages:

- Stage 1- Establishment
- Stage 2- Phased Extraction
- Stage 3- Phased Restoration via Infilling
- Stage 3- Final Restoration

The Site Establishment Stage of the development will see the erection of the earthen screening bunds along the perimeter of the lateral extension areas.

The site will be worked in a phased manner, integrating with the phasing as approved via the extant permission at the existing quarry. The sand and gravel resource will be extracted with the use of a 360° excavator and loaded in to dump truck, where it will be transported to the Poyle Quarry Plant Site. All materials extracted at the Application Site will be processed through the existing Poyle Quarry plant.

The Southern Parcel/ Phase 6 Area will be worked in a southerly direction and the Eastern Parcel/ Phase 7 Area will be worked in a northerly direction in order that the working face would act as an integral noise and visual screen for sensitive properties to the south and north respectively.

Mineral will be extracted to an average depth of 3 metres across the Application Site, matching the approved quarry development at the existing quarry. The extraction area would not require any processing plant or other form of fixed plant. The extension areas will be worked at a rate which

matches that approved for the quarry, a rate of 150,000 tonnes per annum. The Southern/ Phase 6 lands are expected to release some c.65,000 tonnes of mineral and the Eastern/ Phase 7 lands are expected to release some c.150,000 tonnes. The proposed extraction of sand and gravel and restoration of the Application Site is expected to be completed within 2-3 years from commencement.

It is proposed to work the mineral wet, therefore avoiding the requirement for de-watering.

As per the extant permission, progressive restoration would take place immediately behind the extraction area. The backfilling operations would proceed consistently across the two additional phases, with the infill material placed at the base of the void to an average depth of some 3m. The infill material would then be covered with on-site soils. The existing EA Permit for the Site which authorises the infilling activities will be varied to include the Application Site.

Following placement of soils the land would be seeded with a medium-term grass ley mix. Following the cessation of operations at the site, all vehicles, plant and equipment related to the proposed development will be removed.

The proposed hours of operations will accord with those stated at Condition 14 of the extant permission which are 07.00 to 18.00 hours on Monday to Friday and 07.00 to 13.00 hours on Saturday. No operations would be carried out on Sundays or Bank Holidays and Public Holidays.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

GEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Quarrying, by definition, requires the excavation and removal of the mineral deposit, thereby producing a permanent impact on the superficial geological environment.

It is considered that the scale of the proposed development will result in the site continuing to have a limited impact at a local level on the geological environment and the Shepperton Sand and Gravel formation as a whole.

Furthermore, by the nature of quarrying activities, geotechnical impacts will always be possible. Any likely impacts will be minimised by the operator's experience in working the mineral deposit and by adhering to relevant health and safety and best practice guidance.

Given the above, there are considered to be no geological or geotechnically based reasons why the planned development should not proceed in the manner described by the Application.

WATER ENVIRONMENT

A Hydrogeological Risk Assessment (HIA) and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) by hydrogeology, hydrology, flood risk and drainage consultants at Stantec UK Ltd ('Stantec'), which has significant experience in assessing the effects of mineral and waste proposals upon the water environment, including at the existing quarry.

The potential impacts and effects of quarrying and infilling on the water environment have been assessed. No significant effects have been identified during the operational phase or the post restoration phase. This is due to the embedded mitigation elements that have been incorporated into the proposed development which includes wet working (no dewatering), groundwater control via interception trenches/drains, appropriate flood risk design, and the inclusion of appropriate operating procedures to prevent or minimise any impact from potential contamination events associated with the operations.

Mineral extraction during the operational phase will provide additional flood storage for storm events. Post-restoration, run off and flood risk will remain the same as current due to the ground contours remaining unchanged.

On the basis of baseline study and subsequent impact assessment, there are considered to be no over-riding hydrological or hydrogeological related reasons why the Proposed Development should not proceed in the manner described by the Application.

NOISE

A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) report has been prepared by Dr Robert Storey and Johan Beavis Berry of WBM Limited.

The NIA presents an assessment of the potential noise impacts of the proposed mineral extraction site at Poyle. The NIA has been prepared using updated baseline noise survey data to review the existing site noise limit at the nearest residential receptors. Calculated site noise levels at those receptors have been compared to the site noise limit and shown to comply with that limit. The assessment also considers the potential noise impact on

the nearest ecological receptors as well as the cumulative noise impact of the proposals.

The existing noise limits for the site are reviewed based on current advice from the government contained in Planning Practice Guidance (Minerals).

The calculated site noise levels for extraction and infill operations comply with the site noise limit at all of the receiver locations.

For this site, since the proposed operations conform to the advice set out in Planning Practice Guidance (Minerals), it is considered that the proposed extension areas can be worked while ensuring noise emissions do not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment.

BIODIVERSITY

An assessment of the significance of the possible ecological impacts that would result from the proposed development has been undertaken by EcoSurv Ltd. using guidelines produced by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018).

The majority of habitats on site are of no more than site/local importance, with the exclusion of the veteran trees being of district importance, adjacent priority habitats and nearby designated sites being of county importance. With the overall significance of impacts in the absence of mitigation and compensation is considered to be low.

Appropriate mitigation measures are outlined to protect any retained habitat on site. The proposed landscaping and restoration works offers some suitable compensatory habitat for the habitats found on site.

The assessment also considered the potential effects upon protected species arising from the development. The potential for impacts to occur on badger, great crested newt, breeding birds, bats, and other notable species have been considered. Mitigation measures have been proposed to ensure that impacts are avoided or minimised and that where possible enhanced habitats for these species will be delivered by the restoration of the site.

Through careful consideration of the potential impacts, it is concluded that the proposed development complies with current planning policy and that the legal implications arising from the extraction in respect of habitats and species have been addressed.

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

A Landscape and Visual Statement (LVS) was prepared by David Brittain CMLI MIQ of DRaW Ltd who has been a chartered landscape architect for over 20 years and has written several appraisal reports relating to similar type developments.

The assessment has been prepared to establish potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development project. The LVS examines the 'Level of Key Effects' likely to arise from the proposed development on local landscape and visual receptors, similar to a full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) but with less detail, which was considered appropriate for proposed development, given the scale and nature of the proposals.

In terms of landscape features, temporary minor adverse effects are expected due to the removal of a woodland belt and hedgerow within the Site. This will be mitigated by long-term replacement planting which would offer a net increase in biodiversity, over the long term.

In terms of landscape character, for both the Northern and Southern Extension areas, taking into account the current site context which affects local landscape character, there would be Minor adverse effects during extraction then neutral effects post-restoration.

In terms of the effects upon visual amenity, the potential visual impacts of the proposed extensions have been considered from specific viewpoints/receptors. These are detailed in the LVS held at Appendix 9.1. These figures illustrate key identified visual receptors, with potential visual impacts assessed from each position.

For both the Northern and Southern Extension areas during the operational stage, there would be Minor adverse effects for nearby residents and Public Right of Way users, while road users and people at work would experience negligible visual effects. Again, this takes into account the prevailing visual context which includes detracting features such as the existing quarry, peripheral bunds and the All-Waste recycling facility adjacent to the Southern Extension area.

The proposed works within the Northern and Southern Extension areas are considered acceptable within the local landscape and visual baseline, with generally minor adverse effects during extraction and neutral effects post-restoration. The development, over the long term, would comply with relevant planning policies and would provide limited benefits through restoration planting and biodiversity enhancements.

AIR QUALITY AND DUST

Given the scale of the Application Site; its location adjacent to the existing quarry; the fact that it is allocated for minerals extraction in the JMWP; the findings of previous assessments on the matter; and prevailing guidance on the matter, effects upon the environment in terms of air quality and dust are not considered likely to be significant. As such, the requirement for in-depth study is not considered necessary in this instance.

The ES describes how the area is not the subject of high local PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} concentrations, therefore as per the IAQM guidance, the requirement for a detailed disamenity dust impact assessment can be screened out.

It is considered that the potential for nuisance impact as a result of the proposed development is limited due to the wet nature of the material, the phased nature of the development, the limited duration of the proposed operations, the few receptors in the surrounding area, the limited extent of areas where the mineral resource will be exposed in the Site and the management measures proposed for the proposed development site.

A number of mitigation measures are proposed in order to further reduce the potential for air quality/ dust impacts.

Given the same, the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant effects upon the environment in terms of air quality/dust impacts.

TRAFFIC

The project before the Council is for mineral extraction and infilling activities only. The processing and export of the material off-site is governed by a

separate planning permission in the Slough BC administrative area. The existing processing plant and quarry entrance and egress will continue to be utilised. Whilst this permission envisaged the approved haul road, access and processing plant continuing to be used for any extension to the quarry, this will not be required as the works can be completed in the approved time period, as originally granted.

Planning permission was granted by Slough BC under Ref P/10012/008 for the construction of the alternative access road to the processing plant with the eventual removal of the plant and restoration of the site once mineral extraction and infilling within the existing quarry are completed. Condition 4 of the permission states that the development shall cease no later than 8 years from the date of the implementation of the permission. The permission was implemented in 2023 and therefore the permission will cease to have effect in 2031.

The extraction development as permitted allows for the extraction of c.800,000 tonnes of sand and gravel, at a rate of up to 150,000 tonnes per annum. The proposed development will follow on from the permitted extraction, forming 2 additional phases of extraction and infilling. The extant permission was implemented in 2024 and therefore it is anticipated that extraction permitted under the proposed development will commence in 2029 and be completed by 2031.

This proposal does not seek to increase the annual volume of material associated with the permitted mineral development and infilling activities at the existing quarry. Rather, the intention is to continue the existing operations, prolonging the lifetime of the quarry.

Given the same, the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant effects upon the environment in terms of highways impacts.

CULTURAL HERITAGE

A Cultural Heritage Assessment was prepared by Andrew Josephs of Andrew Josephs Associates, a consultancy with extensive experience within all development sectors, and in particular mineral schemes.

The nature of mineral extraction results in the total loss of the archaeological resource wherever extraction takes place, and the potential loss or damage in other areas associated with infrastructure and landscaping.

The Application Site lies within an area rich in archaeology of, in particular, prehistoric and medieval date. In the existing quarry area, and within other quarried areas nearby, pre-extraction archaeological excavation has been carried out.

All but one asset were scoped out of detailed assessment due to intervening development and distance. The Grade II Dairy at Berkyn Manor sits 80m south of the southern boundary of the SPEA. As far as can be established from its surroundings, the setting of the dairy has been significantly degraded to its north (that being in the direction of the SPEA). Land use is industrial in nature and likely to include activities that would impact on noise and olfaction. It is considered that the effects of the development would not impact on the significance of the listed building in any perceptible way.

A Written Scheme of Investigation would be prepared and approved by RBWM, prior to development commencing. Its implementation would be ensured under a planning condition. The effects upon archaeology are offset by the contribution to archaeological knowledge arising from the excavations. Having regard to the baseline conditions and the nature of the

proposed development, there would be no residual effects upon known cultural heritage assets.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

The evaluation of effects of the proposed development in terms of waste management comprises a qualitative assessment based on an analysis of potential effects on the environment undertaken in other sections of the ES. The assessment takes into account a review of relevant literature and professional judgement in relation to impacts upon the environment in terms of the proposed development.

The infilling aspect of the proposed development will be controlled via a permit to be issued with the EA. The existing EA Permit for the Site which authorises the infilling activities will be varied to include the Application Site and will include a range of measure to protect the surrounding environment.

As per Paragraph 201 of the NPPF, the focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). As such, the Planning Authority should assume that this regimes will operate effectively at the Site and therefore any further consideration of the same is not considered necessary in the ES.

Subject to the implementation of the measures outlined above and other measures recommended within the ES, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant Waste Management Related impacts.

SOIL AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A requirement exists that due regard to the likely significant direct and indirect consequences that a development proposal would have on the environment which might result from the use of natural resources.

The Applicant intends to conserve the natural resources by maximising the resource potential at the site. It is considered that the loss of soil cover to facilitate the proposed development will be mitigated by the screening benefits and site restoration as proposed. The soil transfer will have no effect on neighbouring agricultural lands or ecological features.

Given the above, the proposed development is not considered to result in any significant effects upon the environment in this regard.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

The ES has considered the impact of the proposed development in the context of population/settlement, employment and other socio-economic effects.

Minerals can only be won and worked where they are found. The Site is allocated for mineral extraction in the JMWLP. The proposed development will contribute to the sand and gravel land bank in Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities. This in turn supports the construction industry and facilitates house building, infrastructure delivery and the tourism industry within the joint authorities area and across the South East.

The proposed development will make a direct contribution to the local economy via continued direct local employment and expenditure. Of further economic significance will be the downstream impact that the mineral and

waste proposals will have in supporting the employment of people across the Applicant's business and indirectly, the local and regional construction and manufacturing sectors. The project therefore is considered to deliver significant socio-economic benefits.

CLIMATE CHANGE, ACCIDENTS AND DISASTERS

The potential for likely significant impacts on climate change due to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are considered unlikely given the scale and nature of the proposals. The only potential for direct and indirect climate change impacts from the proposed development is considered to be through the emissions resultant from vehicle movements associated with the development.

Given the worldwide geographic location of the site it is predicted that the development will not be adversely affected by climate change, having the capacity to deal with the most likely variations in climate and storm events.

Given the nature of the proposed processes on-site and the experience of the applicant, the potential for accidents and disasters relating to the processes are limited and, in any event, are controlled by a multitude of legislation.

The ES considers the potential for downstream effects, also known as Scope 3 with reference to GHG emissions and whether these indirect effects are likely significant effects. The EIA Directive requires that material should only be included in the ES if a reasoned conclusion can properly be based, with conjecture and speculation having no place in the EIA process.

The volume, location, nature and extent of construction projects over the course of the lifetime of the EIA project cannot be known, nor accurately

predicted. However, every development project / planning application that consumes aggregate in whatever form, is screened to determine the potential for likely significant environmental effects. It is at this stage that downstream use of hydrocarbons and alternative energy sources and their likely significant effect on Climate are considered.

Therefore, given the above, it is determined that there will be no significant effects in respect to GHG emissions, insofar as it is possible to predict.

HUMAN HEALTH

The impacts of the proposed development upon human health are considered to have been fully covered within the relevant sections of the ES; namely the Water Environment; Noise; and Air Quality Sections (Section 6, 7 and 10).

All of these sections identify relevant guidance and legislation which has been implemented to protect human health and demonstrates how monitoring results from the quarry should that the existing practices and working methods are appropriate and adequate for protecting human health. The proposed development will see a continuation of the best practices already observed at the quarry which will accord with the relevant standards.

Notwithstanding, a number of mitigation measures are proposed in order to further minimise impacts associated with the proposed development. Given the same, the proposed development would not result in any significant effect upon the environment by virtue of human health impacts.

INTRA AND INTER CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

Intra cumulative impacts can occur where a single receptor is affected by more than one source of effect arising from different aspects of the project. This has been assessed at relevant sections of the ES.

In order for there to be inter cumulative impacts, it is a practical necessity for there to be an overlap (accumulation) of impacts with other developments / projects creating similar effects. Following consideration of the various technical sections of the ES and accompanying reports, the vast proportion of the impacts arising from the proposed development are sufficiently remote that the potential for them to overlap with other operation/ consented development is limited.

Any potential cumulative impacts arising from the development project are considered to have been adequately encompassed and accounted for within the assessment of baseline conditions and impact assessment sections of the various technical assessments which form part of the ES. No significant cumulative impacts have been identified in any of the assessments and therefore it is considered that the proposed development in combination with other development projects would not result in any significant cumulative effects upon the environment.