

**Blaby District Council**  
**Planning Committee**

**Date of Meeting** 28 November 2024

**Title of Report** Leicestershire County Council Planning Application:  
2024/EIA/0101/LCC - Proposed lateral extension to the  
mineral extraction area within Croft Quarry, retention of  
access and ancillary development, expansion of recycling  
activities and reclamation via the importation of restoration  
material at Croft Quarry, Coventry Road, Croft.

**Report Author** Planning & Strategic Growth Group Manager

**1. What is this report about?**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Members of Planning Committee of a major planning application that has been submitted to Leicestershire County Council by Aggregate Industries UK Ltd under application reference: 2024/EIA/0101/LCC. The proposed development is for the lateral extension to the mineral extraction area within Croft Quarry, retention of access and ancillary development, expansion of recycling activities and reclamation via the importation of restoration material. A copy of the site location plan is attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 Leicestershire County Council notified Blaby District Council of this application on 17 September 2024 requesting the District Planning Authority to provide formal comments on this application. Blaby District Council is a consultee on this proposal and as such, Members should consider whether or not to make formal comments on this planning application in line with your Officer's recommendations outlined in the report below.

**2. Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 That Blaby District Council, in its role as a consultee, makes formal comments on this planning application.

**3. Reason for Decision(s) Recommended**

- 3.1 Having considered the information submitted, the District Planning Authority does not object to the principle of the proposed development but does raise concerns that the Applicant has not provided sufficient information to allow for the determination of this planning application. These reasons are outlined in the body of the report below.

## **4. Matters to consider**

### **4.1 The Site**

The site of Croft Quarry is situated to the north of the village of Croft and to the southwest of the village of Huncote. The quarry covers an area of approximately 111.5 hectares and is accessed via a private entrance and road off Coventry Road. Although it is understood that the quarry has a long history and presence in the area, industrial operations at the quarry are understood to have intensified during the 1800s.

The site has since expanded considerably as the demand for granite stone increased. Consequently, the site currently hosts a rail head with a siding onto the Birmingham - Leicester mainline railway along with various buildings, industrial plant and machinery/equipment which are all used in association with the day-to-day operations of the quarry.

In terms of constraints, the site is adjacent to Croft Conservation Area which lies to the west and two Grade II Listed Buildings at No.5 Hill Street and St. Michaels and All Angels Church on Huncote Road, Croft. Part of the quarry is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 due to the River Soar running through the southern half of the site and parts of Old Croft Hill and the existing extraction area are classified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The Birmingham to Leicester railway line runs through the site and part of the southern boundary abutting the train line is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Various Public Rights of Way lie to the north, south and west of the quarry, including a formal walkway to the east of the site known as New Croft Hill.

### **4.2 Background**

The District Planning Authority received notification that a planning application had been submitted to Leicestershire County Council on 9 September 2024 by Aggregate Industries UK Ltd under application reference: 2024/EIA/0101/LCC for the lateral extension to the mineral extraction area within Croft Quarry, retention of access and ancillary development, expansion of recycling activities and reclamation via the importation of restoration material.

The application is broadly similar to a previous application made in 2019 (2019/CM/0125/LCC) which included the following works:

- To laterally extend the Mineral Extraction Boundary.
- Placement of overburden within the existing quarry void.
- Relocate aggregate processing area (Modular Plant).
- Relocate current stocking areas.
- Relocate workshop, weighbridge and wheel wash.
- The relocation of rail infrastructure within the site (all amendments to be done within the Company's ownership with no impact on the main rail line.
- Relocate office accommodation.
- Relocation of Recycling Area.

- Retain access from Marion's Way onto the B4114 (Coventry Road).
- Permanent retention of Concrete Block Plant.
- Restoration of void via importation of restoration material.

#### 4.3 Proposal

The current application seeks to broadly follow the 2019 application with the following key revisions:

- Provide for the re-configuration of the phasing of the restoration operations and mineral extraction.
- Expand the permitted recycling operations on site and blend with aggregate for sale as secondary aggregate via road and rail.

The proposed development now includes the following elements:

- Restoration of existing quarry void via importation of restoration material via rail and road to restored level as permitted by 2019/0657/01 (2019/CM/0125/LCC);
- Re-configured phasing of mineral extraction;
- Retention and expansion of Recycling Operations;
- Relocate aggregate processing area (Modular Plant);
- Relocate current stocking areas;
- Relocate workshop, weighbridge and wheel wash;
- Relocation of rail infrastructure and installation of rail off and on loading facility;
- Relocate office accommodation;
- Permanent retention of access from Marion Way onto the B4114 (Coventry Road);
- Permanent Retention of Concrete Block Plant;
- Retention of Asphalt Operations for years 1-9; and
- Retention of RMX operations in existing location for Years 1-9 and relocation in Years 10-20.

### Restoration of Existing Quarry Void

According to the accompanying Non-Technical Summary, the existing quarry void area is approximately 33.3ha with a depth up to -136m AOD. Within years 1-9 of the permission the proposals seek to import approximately 14 million m<sup>3</sup> (up to 750,000 m<sup>3</sup> per annum) of predominantly inert restoration material (construction and demolition waste) to raise the level of the existing void. The restoration material will raise the level of the existing void to approximately 17m AOD and preserve the Geological SSSI within the quarry faces above.

The overall aim of the restoration is to create a site with a variety of habitats of both nature conservation and amenity value whilst reflecting the local landscape character.

It is proposed to improve existing Rights of Way through the site linking the New Hill and Croft village with a proposed upgrade of right of way V57 to a multiuser route linking Croft with the south entrance of the New Hill along Croft Hill Road.

### Mineral Extraction

The proposal seeks to re-configure phasing of mineral extraction to that approved under planning permission 2019/CM/0125/LCC. The application seeks within years 10-20 to extend mineral extraction via a lateral extension to the southeast of the existing quarry void. The proposed extension will comprise of circa 5ha and would release approximately 6.3 million tonnes of aggregate. Production would be up to 1 million tonnes per annum (tpa), which would take up to 10 years to extract.

This area is currently occupied by existing processing plant, site offices and other processes (Readymix concrete plant and Asphalt making plant) currently operating on site, which will be relocated.

Overburden would be removed from the extraction area and placed within the existing quarry void.

The rock will be worked via blasting in approximately 7 benches. Aggregate processing would be undertaken with mobile plant at the quarry face or southeast corner adjacent to the New Hill. Material will be transported to the aggregate processing plant via dumper truck.

### Recycling

The site currently has permission for recycling, importation, processing, storage and sale of inert materials to supplement aggregate use at Croft Quarry. The current permission has a capacity of 200,000tpa (Ref: 2016/0990/01).

The Company also holds a standard rules permit associated with the block plant operations. Under this permit the Company recycles waste concrete products.

As part of this application, it is proposed to expand the recycling operations with the introduction of soils recycling at a rate of 150,000 tonnes per annum. Recycling is to include non- hazardous soils and construction and demolition material. Recycled material would be imported via road and sold via rail and road material.

### Concrete Block Plant, Ready Mix Concrete Plant and Asphalt Plant

The existing concrete block plant is to be permanently retained and has been fed by the existing quarry and recently via importation from Bardon Hill Quarry. However, at the outset of the proposed new development and as extraction operations will not commence until year 10, the block plant will continue to import, either via road from Bardon Quarry or by rail.

The ready-mix concrete plant is set to be retained in its current location for the first 9 years before being relocated to the southeastern part of the site adjacent to the concrete block plant, once extraction operations commence.

It is proposed to retain the existing asphalt plant in its current location for the initial 9-year period before being permanently removed.

### Proposed Rail Unloading Area

Restoration material will predominantly be imported via rail, with the rail siding relocated to run parallel with the Leicester to Birmingham mainline. The new rail line at Croft Quarry creates a loop and reduces shunting.

Trains would exit the mainline and travel along the internal rail sidings with material placed unloaded in a special steel clad building before being transported by on low-level conveyor to the void. Material will be transported by dumper trucks for the initial construction stage whilst the conveyors system is being design and constructed. The proposed conveyor is approximately 1.5m in height and shall be covered above. A proposed 4m high acoustic fence is also proposed to mitigate noise impact.

Stockpiles of materials are to be a maximum height of 12m, 5m and 3m.

Croft Rail unloading will be 24/7 and split between daytime 06:00-22:00 and nighttime 22:00-06:00, with 2-4 trains would arrive per day. Unloading durations are 4 hours.

### Timings

Restoration is proposed to commence within years 1-9, with extraction taking place from year 10 – 20. Stripping of the overburden is expected to take two years to complete, with extraction and blasting commencing subsequently. The cessation date will be 20 years after commencement.

Blasting will take place only between 11:00 and 16:00 Monday to Friday. Monitoring is to be controlled by condition in conjunction with Blaby District Council Environmental Services.

The hours of operation will be as existing with the continued loading, movement and serving of trains to be carried out at any time as currently permitted. This application does not propose to revise the permitted hours of operation of the site.

The proposed extension, restoration and recycling operations would see a continuation of mineral extraction at Croft Quarry utilising the existing haul road, access and connectivity to the rail network. Although imported restoration material would predominantly be via rail the Company seeks the ability to import a proportion of waste via lorry to provide market flexibility.

Due to the size and strategic nature of this proposed development, it is possible that the proposal may have an environmental impact on the local area and community. As such, the planning application is supported by detailed plans, an Environmental Statement, Flood Risk Assessment and a Transport Statement, all of which are available to view on Leicestershire County Council's website by clicking the following link and by entering the planning application number in the relevant search engine:

<http://leicestershire.planning-register.co.uk/>.

#### 4.4 Representations Received

All matters concerning public consultation on this planning application has been solely undertaken by Leicestershire County Council.

#### 4.5 Planning Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

National Planning Policy for Waste (2014)

Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document (2013)

- Policy CS6 – Employment
- Policy CS10 – Transport Infrastructure
- Policy CS19 – Bio-diversity and Geo-diversity
- Policy CS20 – Historic Environment and Culture
- Policy CS21 – Climate Change
- Policy CS22 – Flood Risk Management
- Policy CS23 – Waste
- Policy CS24 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (2019)

- Policy DM2 – Development in the Countryside
- Policy DM8 – Local Parking and Highway Design Standards
- Policy DM12 – Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets
- Policy DM13 – Land Contamination and Pollution
- Policy DM15 – Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Minerals and Waste Local Plan for Leicestershire (2019, reviewed 2022)

- Policy M4 – Crushed Rock
- Policy M11 – Safeguarding of Mineral Resources
- Policy M12 – Safeguarding of Existing Mineral Sites and Associated Minerals Infrastructure
- Policy M13 – Associated Industrial Development
- Policy M15 – Mineral Waste
- Policy W1 – Waste Management Capacity
- Policy W3 – Strategic Waste Facilities
- Policy W4 – Non-strategic Waste Facilities
- Policy W5 – Locating Waste Facilities
- Policy W8 – Waste Disposal
- Policy DM1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy DM2 – Local Environment and Community Protection
- Policy DM3 – Strategic Green Infrastructure
- Policy DM5 – Landscape Impact
- Policy DM6 – Soils
- Policy DM7 – Sites of Bio-diversity and Geo-diversity Interest
- Policy DM8 – Historic Environment

Policy DM9 – Transportation by Road  
Policy DM10 – Public Rights of Way  
Policy DM11 – Cumulative Impacts  
Policy DM12 – Restoration, Aftercare and After-use

Fosse Villages Neighbourhood Plan: (2021)

Policy FV1 – Road Traffic  
Policy FV2 – Rail  
Policy FV4 – Biodiversity  
Policy FV5 – Local Green Spaces  
Policy FV6 – Design  
Policy FV14 – Croft Quarry

Other Documents

- Active Travel Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Tourism Growth Plan 2025-2030
- Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023 – 2026

#### 4.6 Formal Comments

Having regard to the submitted details, whilst the District Planning Authority does not object to the principle of the proposed development, it is considered that further details and information are required in order for Blaby District Council to be able to provide a full and comprehensive assessment of the development in its entirety. These matters are addressed in the following points, outlined below:

##### *Impacts on Neighbouring Uses, including Character and Appearance*

- There are general inconsistencies between the levels proposed to fill the void to. The Development Plan drawing Year 1-9 and 10-20 indicate that the void will be filled to a depth of -40 aOD, whereas the planning statement states the void will be filled to 17 aOD. This discrepancy requires clarification.
- The River Soar Corridor plan, substations, a waste hopper, a new wall and sidings are not consistent with the Development Plans drawing Year 1-9 and 10-20. These discrepancies require clarification before a formal assessment on the impacts of the proposal can be made.
- The location and storage of stockpiles of materials is not clear. Stockpiled Details of such are required in order to ensure adequate mitigation measures are in place to control dust and particulate matter.



- The proposed development provides details for a bund set to the west of the recycling plant and recycling area as illustrated on Development Plan drawing Year 1-9 and 10-20. Details including ground levels, and proposed plans and elevations are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity, designated heritage assets and associated ecological implications.
- Development Plan drawing Year 1-9 and 10-20 show the proposed layout of the conveyor. In order to fully assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets a sectional drawing illustrating how the height the conveyor will be set above ground level and details of how the conveyor will be enclosed are required.
- Development Plan drawing Year 1-9 highlights an area for 'soil washing'. Details including proposed plans and elevations are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets.
- The outline of a building/structure set immediately to the north of the recycling plant and recycling area is illustrated on Development Plan drawing Year 10-20. Confirmation as to what this building will be used for including proposed plans and elevations are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets.
- The outline of building/structure set immediately to the north of the recycling plant and recycling area at the edge of the proposed lateral extension are illustrated on Development Plan drawing Year 10-20. Confirmation as to what this building will be used for including proposed plans and elevations are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets.
- Development Plan drawing Year 10-20 has annotated the location for an office compound and parking area. Details including proposed plans and elevations are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets.

### Air Quality

- The application includes technical specifications for the replacement Readymix Plant, which is proposed to be located on the land adjacent to the Block Making Plant to the southeast of the site. The Readymix Plant is regulated by a Permit under the Environmental Permitting Regime for airborne emissions. The submitted details appear to be acceptable and will be further considered by an appropriate application for a new Permit.
- The application includes technical specifications for works to the existing Block Making Plant, which will be retained in its current position. The improvements to the aggregate bays and silos are likely to reduce the impact of the Plant. The Block Making Plant is also regulated by a Permit under the Environmental Permitting Regime for airborne emissions. The submitted details appear to be acceptable and will be further considered by an appropriate application for a revised Permit. 'The Batching Silo Location' and 'Batching Silo Sections' plans have notes which refer to an 'egg layer', a concrete block making process that was previously at an adjacent area of the quarry site. The proposed egg layer does not appear to be shown or annotated on the site layout for year 10-20. A revised plan should be submitted with this information on it.
- The year 10-20 layout plan indicates a large building annotated 'Aggregate processing', which presumably will be for processing the newly won stone. No details appear to have been submitted for this building. It is a large feature (referred to in section 4.3.4 of the submitted Planning Statement) and therefore further details should be submitted prior to determination in order to fully assess the impacts its impacts in relation to noise and disturbance.
- The proposed expanded recycling operations on site are referred to in the submitted Planning Statement (sections 1.1.2, 4.4.3 and 7.1.4) but there appears to be no additional information. This is an important element of the application. Further details should be submitted prior to determination in order to fully assess the impacts in relation to noise and disturbance.
- The overall impacts on air quality and of dust are considered in sections 9.1.27 to 9.1.32 of the submitted Planning Statement. It is recognised that the potential for dust emissions is increased, but with appropriate mitigation measures in place the overall effect is predicted to be "insignificant". Section 9.1.31 proposes that the "proactive monitoring strategy for nuisance dust" is enhanced, together with the addition of PM<sub>10</sub>. Whilst this enhancement is welcomed, it is considered that other metrics of PM should be also be included, at the minimum PM<sub>2.5</sub>. A suitably worded condition should be attached to any planning permission granted to require the submission of a strategy for prior approval, review, and implementation (including the submission of reports) for mitigation of dust and particulate matter.

- The Environmental Scheme should also be suitably revised so that it provides a robust on-going vehicle for ensuring continued compliance. The wording of the condition regulating the Environmental Scheme should also be revisited before being attached to any planning permission granted for the current application.
- Chapter 11 of the submitted Environmental Statement considers air quality and dust. Section 11.2 identifies potential receptors within 400m of the boundary of various elements of the application site, and the predicted impacts associated with those receptors (including dust soiling and the health effects of breathing in PM<sub>10</sub>).
- A number of proposed mitigation measures are described. Blaby District Council's Air Quality Action Plan is cited in section 11.2.18, as being a reason for endeavouring that mineral exporting HGVs are compliant with Euro 6 and 7 specification, and future vehicle emission standards.
- An 'Assessment of Existing and Baseline Environment – Dust & PM<sub>10</sub> / PM<sub>2.5</sub> follows. It is noted that PM<sub>2.5</sub> is included, which is consistent with the comments above. The results of monitoring are discussed including data from the use of dust gauges at a number of locations, and a gravimetric device at Shades Close (in 2017). The monitoring confirmed that the quarry was responsible for a local contribution to ambient levels of those pollutants, although no exceedance of national Air Quality Objectives was identified. Section 11.2.35 repeats the proposal in the Planning Statement regarding enhanced monitoring going forward. It is also recommended that other metrics of PM should also be included, at the minimum PM<sub>2.5</sub> and a condition relating to a strategy should be provided.
- Potential mitigation is considered in Section 11.3, with a listing of measures in section 11.3.1. Some of the listed measures are related to specific locations, others are more general. Whilst the measures appear to be reasonable, it is not considered that they are in a form that would be easily enforced through planning controls. There is some overlap with conditions on the other regulatory regimes on certain areas of the quarry site (e.g. Permits from Blaby District Council or the Environment Agency). The situation is therefore complex and not easily understood. It would be preferable for a single document to be available which includes precise measures for identified processes on the wider site, citing overlaps with the over regulatory regimes. The Environmental Scheme may be an appropriate document, suitably revised. It is already recommended that a condition relating to the Environmental Scheme should be attached to any planning permission granted in respect of the current application.

- Section 11.4 provides the 'Air Quality and Dust Conclusions', which state that "Overall, in terms of air quality and dust, the proposed development and operations will not have unacceptable direct or indirect impact on population and human health; biodiversity; land, soils, water, air and climate; material assets, cultural heritage and the landscape; or the interaction between these factors in accordance with EIA regulations."
- The submitted Dust Impact Assessment provides further detail on the air quality and dust impacts of the proposed development, with most of the important information being included in Chapter 11 of the Environmental Statement. These points are details within the response above.

### Noise and Disturbance

- The proposed rail handling shed is described in sections 4.6.3 to 4.6.6 of the submitted Planning Statement. It is shown on the submitted conceptual plan as being enclosed on 3 sides, with double cladding to reduce noise. As this is a conceptual plan, it is considered that it would be reasonable to attach a condition to any planning permission granted requiring full details to be submitted for prior approval, together with a specific noise assessment. It is considered that it would be appropriate to require an in-situ noise survey to be undertaken, with any necessary remedial works, through the submission of a suitable report for prior approval.
- The details of the associated rail layout (which is referred to in sections 4.2.6 and 4.6.1 of the submitted Planning Statement) does not appear to have been submitted and therefore these should be included in the same condition.
- A 4m high acoustic fence is proposed in section 4.7.1 of the submitted Planning Statement. Appendix 3 of that document (and Appendix 3 of the submitted Environmental Statement) shows some technical information regarding the fence, the position of the fence is indicated on the submitted site layout plans. As this is an important noise mitigation feature, it is recommended that a condition is attached requiring full details of the fence to be submitted and agreed. It is also considered to be appropriate to require the submission of a validation report on the completion of its installation, and also a programme of inspections and maintenance.
- The current operational hours for the mineral extraction and processing operations are given in section 4.8.4 of the submitted Planning Statement. It is noted from section 4.8.5 that there is no proposal to revise them.
- The overall impacts of noise are considered by sections 9.1.20 to 9.1.26 of the submitted Planning Statement. It refers to the noise assessment and its conclusion that the appropriate boundary noise limits can be achieved. With regards to compliance, recommendations are included above for several elements of the scheme to be subjected to in-situ testing. The Environmental Scheme should be suitably revised so that it provides a robust on-going vehicle for ensuring continued compliance. The wording of

the condition regulating the Environmental Scheme should also be revisited before being attached to any planning permission granted for the current application.

- Chapter 10 of the submitted Environmental Statement considers noise. A list of proposed mitigation measures is provided in section 10.3.2. The 4m boundary acoustic fence is included (as item 2). The list also includes a 'screening bund (and this is indicated on the submitted layout plan), screening of the conveyor system, and the provision of an area for the operation of a mobile waste processing plant. However no further details appear to have been submitted of these elements. It would be preferable for details of such to be submitted Prior to Determination.
- Finally, the list includes 'Acoustic screening extending from the south-west corner of the proposed rail off-loading shed in a westerly direction (approx. 50m in length, min. 3.5m in height) to minimise noise break out from within the shed and also minimise noise from the train movements in a southerly direction'. It is not clear whether this is another, different, reference to the boundary acoustic fence. The applicant should clarify this.
- A separate Noise Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application, with the important information being included in Chapter 10 of the Environmental Statement. Chapter 10 of the Noise Impact Assessment considers the potential impact of uncertainty. The principles supports previous comments that certain elements of the proposed development (e.g. the rail unloading facility) are the subject of conditions requiring the submission of details including a specific noise assessment.
- The impacts of blasting are considered in sections 9.1.33 to 9.1.41 of the submitted Planning Statement. A suitably worded condition imposing limits should be attached to any planning permission granted for the current application.
- Chapter 12 of the submitted Environmental Statement considers Blasting and Vibration. A Blasting and Vibration Assessment for the proposal has been prepared by Advance Environmental and the assessment is contained in Technical Appendix G. This document is dated April 2019, and therefore is the document that was submitted with the previous application. The proposed limit on ground vibration is referred to in section 12.3.1 of the Environmental Statement and Section 9.1.1 of the Blasting and Vibration Assessment. The limit of vibration limit of 6.0 mms-1 peak particle velocity appears to be reasonable. However the section also includes the statement that 'AIUK will also ensure that no individual blast will exceed 12 mms-1'. The reason for this additional limit (which double the numerical value of the first) does not appear to be given. The current limit for air overpressure is proposed to be used going forward, as cited in section 12.3.2, along with a control on secondary blasting. Section 12.3.3 states that 'Current best accepted modern practice in the extraction industries, safe and practical measures will be adopted that ensure the minimisation of air overpressure generated by blasting at source,

considering such factors as initiation technique'. However it is not clear as to how such potential future improvements would be included in planning controls, other than through the Environmental Scheme which was prevailing at the time. It is unclear as to the direct enforceability of such an element of the Environmental Scheme.

- The Blasting and Vibration Conclusions are given in Section 12.4. Sections 12.4.1 and 12.4.2 refer to a 'vibration criterion of 6.0 mms-1 for 95% of events', which does not appear to be consistent with section 12.3.1. It is considered that the applicant should clarify the intended limits to be imposed, prior to Determination.

#### Lighting

- Chapter 16 of the submitted Environmental Statement considers lighting. The general principles proposed for temporary lighting are described, along with permanent lighting for the extraction area (none), the aggregate processing area, retained block plant, new ready mix concrete plant, conveyor, workshop, rail unloading facility, and weighbridge/office/parking. The lighting conclusions are given in section 16.4, including 'The assessment of the potential impacts of lighting from the development proposals has found that with appropriate mitigation measures the impacts will be acceptable'.
- Details of the lighting associated with the developments was the subject of a condition on the previous application. The revised scheme is likely to require amendments to any details previously submitted and therefore it is recommended that the previous condition is duplicated on any planning permission granted for the current application. Section 16.3.23 of the submitted Environmental Statement proposes such a condition.

#### Impact of construction

- Section 4.2 of the submitted Dust Impact Assessment refers to the demolition of existing elements prior to the proposed lateral extension commencing. The section states that there is potential for the demolition to generate dust and mitigation would be needed in accordance with Section 8.0 of the document.
- It is considered to be appropriate to control the potential impacts by way of a Demolition Method Statement. It is recommended that a suitably worded condition is attached to any planning permission granted, requiring the submission of such a document for prior approval and implementation.

### General Environmental Comments

- This application proposes an amended timescale to a previously approved scheme. The amended timescale delays the new extraction activity, the removal of the asphalt plant and relocation of the concrete making plant for 9 years. The potential impacts of the new extraction activity will remain as previously predicted, but only from year 10 onwards. Blaby District Council Environmental Services previously commented on that application and conditions were attached to the planning permission as a result. The previous comments are considered to still be relevant. Details have been submitted seeking to discharge several of those conditions, including movement of certain processes, the Environmental Scheme, and lighting.
- This application also includes revised proposals for the rail handling facility and conveyor for material to fill the quarried area. In general, Blaby District Council Environmental Services are satisfied that the revised proposals are likely to result in a reduced potential for off-site impacts from dust and noise.
- Finally, the application includes new proposals for recycling of soils and works to the block making plant. The potential impacts of the soil recycling have been included in the report above. The works to the block making plant is likely to result in a reduced environmental impact of those processes.
- Blaby District Council Environmental Services do not have significant issues to raise with the principle of the proposed scheme as it is submitted. It is recommended that planning controls are used to ensure that the predicted off-site impacts of the scheme are validated and that suitable remedial steps are taken if shortfalls are identified.
- An Environmental Scheme has been in place for many years to describe the monitoring undertaken by the site operator of noise, vibration and dust from the various activities located at the quarry site. The most recently approved document referred to in section 9.1.22 of the submitted Planning Statement and is appended to the Dust Assessment report that has been submitted with the current application. This Environmental Scheme will need to be revised again in the light of the current application, and Blaby District Council Environmental Services have made comments in the sections above. Blaby District Council Environmental Services have additional comments to make on the document:
  - Section 1.6 relates to 3 way communications between the operator, LCC and BDC, but the mechanism of implementing this is not clear
  - Section 2.2.1 Frequency of monitoring 'not less than once per year' is not precise and does not seem sufficient. There is no definition of 'key stage'
  - Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 – monitoring when site is fully operational. How does this work with 'key stages' in 2.2.1?
  - The monitoring locations appear to be satisfactory

- The reports referred to in Sections 2.2.9 and 2.2.10 do not appear to have any associated mechanism for submission to MPA, consideration, etc.
- Section 2.4.1 qualifications – is likely to be unenforceable.
- Section 2.4.2 relaxation for up to 8 weeks per year for temporary works, is potentially a long period for any off-site impacts to be endured. Activities are listed, but no information about focussed monitoring
- Section 3.3.4 Refers to National Air Quality Strategy, without a year, but not the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) and associated statutory guidance (which includes monitoring equipment).

### Health, Leisure and Tourism Considerations

Blaby District Council Health, Leisure and Tourism team welcomes proposals to restore and enhance the quarry void for nature conservation and amenity value. These proposals offer a unique opportunity enhance and expand upon an existing attraction and to boost visitor numbers and the tourism offer within the District. In order to fully realise the opportunities on offer through the restoration process Blaby District Council Health Leisure and Tourism have highlighted the following areas for consideration:

- In order to enhance accessibility further consideration should be given to access points, sign posting and parking areas for visitors.
- It is noted that the area has limited and accessible car parking spaces, accessible cycle parking and charging points for EV vehicles. Blaby District Council would welcome plans to improve the provision of such to boost visitor number and accessibility.
- There are a number of public footpaths around the site and whilst upgrading and provision of new footpath routes to link nearby settlements and provide access to the restored site are extremely welcome, further details are required to fully assess the suitability of such to encourage walking, cycling, wheeling routes and accessibility.
- Whilst the inclusion of a visitor centre is encouraged, the exact location and access point to the building is unclear. Further details including proposed plans and elevations, are required in order to assess the associated impacts on residential amenity and designated heritage assets and suitability of the proposed location of the centre.
- Information boards throughout the site would be welcome, detailing the history of the area and its nature. Blaby District Council would welcome the opportunity to promote Visit Blaby and signpost to our social media and website.
- Blaby District Council Health, Leisure and Tourism team sees the proposal and wider site as an excellent opportunity to enhance the tourism offer at the locality and also the wider District by providing activities such as bike hire, go ape type activities, and play area with equipment, etc. Blaby



District Council would welcome opportunities to liaise with the applicants and Leicestershire County Council to explore the feasibility of incorporating such activities at the site in partnership with the District Council and others.

#### Additional Comments

- In the event of planning permission being granted for this proposed development, the District Planning Authority is seeking clarification in respect of the mechanisms for the enforcement of planning conditions and the handling of complaints between the Applicant, Leicestershire County Council in its role as the Mineral Planning Authority and Blaby District Council.
- Consideration should be given to the controls that will arise through the Environmental Permitting regime both on the waste activities and associated processes involved regarding the quarrying operations, including how these relate to planning conditions.
- It is noted that the provision for air quality and noise monitoring equipment, a working party on dust and a working party on blasting were included within the signed S106 agreement for the 2019 application. Blaby District Council would seek for this to be reviewed in the light of the latest scheme.
- Clarification is required to confirm the extent of monitoring being undertaken by the Applicant and that undertaken by Blaby District Council, including the terms of reference for the proposed working parties.

#### **5.0 What will it cost and are there opportunities for savings?**

5.1 Not applicable as Blaby District Council is a consultee in this matter.

#### **6.0 What are the risks and how can they be reduced?**

6.1 By choosing not to make formal comments on this planning application, or, by offering unequivocal support to the proposed development based on the submitted information without requesting further information, your Officers consider that the District Planning Authority would be making an ill-informed judgement on the proposed development.

6.2 Consequently, your Officers are not satisfied at this time that the residential amenities of existing nearby uses and occupiers would be sufficiently mitigated from the proposed development. In addition, your Officers are not satisfied that the resulting development, if approved, would not have a harmful impact on the significance and setting of designated heritage assets within Croft Conservation Area.

- 6.3 In order to safeguard the living conditions and residential amenities of nearby occupiers as well as the significance and setting of various designated heritage assets within Croft Conservation Area. Your Officers are of the consideration that further information be requested, as detailed in paragraph 4.6 of this report, so that a comprehensive view of the proposed development can be taken.

## **7. Other options considered**

- 7.1 The alternative options considered are as follows:
- a) Do not object to the application and do not request the submission of additional information;
  - b) Object to the application based on the submitted details;
  - c) Do nothing and do not comment on the application.

## **8. Other significant issues**

In preparing this report, the author has considered issues related to Human Rights, Legal Matters, Human Resources, Equalities, Public Health Inequalities, and Climate Local and there are no areas of concern.

## **9 Appendix**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan of Croft Quarry

## Appendix 1

### Site Location Plan of Croft Quarry

Application Site Edged in Red





