

2. Geology, Soils and Agriculture

Introduction

- 2.1 The principle aim of this chapter is to identify any additional information relating to Geology, Soils and Agriculture that require consideration since the submission of a previous EIA addendum (March 2019). This addendum chapter should be considered along with the original EIA submission and previous addendum.
- 2.2 The original EIA submission (March 2014), assessed the geology, soils and agriculture associated with the site and its wider context. As part of the original assessment, desk and site studies were undertaken as well as consultations with appropriate organisations.
- 2.3 The key findings from the original 2014 assessment are as follows:
- Disturbances to geology, soils and agriculture were to occur temporarily during the construction phase only. No disturbances were anticipated during the operational phase of the project.
 - Mitigation measures were outlined for the construction and operational phase, particularly in reference to stabilising the quarry faces.
 - There were no significant adverse residual effects anticipated as a result of the construction or operational phase highlighted for geology, soils or agriculture.
- 2.4 The 2019 addendum concluded that the findings reached in the original EIA remained valid and that the proposed development will not preclude further mineral extraction from the quarry site post decommissioning of the proposed plant. The construction of the development will involve regrading of the quarry shelves, but in comparison to the amount of rock that may be extracted from a fully functioning and permitted quarrying operation; the impact on geology is considered to be neutral.
- 2.5 Any impacts highlighted for Geology, Soils or Agriculture identified in addition to those examined in the original 2014 assessment and the 2019 addendum, within or near the site, will be described in this chapter.

Methodology

- 2.6 This assessment considers information collected during a further site visit verification on 9th February 2023 and a review of published data which may have been updated since the original 2014 assessment and the 2019 addendum. A review was also undertaken of the following information sources:
- Geindex – map-based dataset that contains information on geology of the area including:
 - Superficial Geology;
 - Bedrock Geology;

- Bedrock Aquifer;
 - Superficial Aquifer; and
 - Groundwater Vulnerability.
- Earth Science Conservation Review (ESCR).

2.7 A review has taken place of the recently approved (14/03/2023) planning application (LA03/2022/0649/F) at the site for the “Erection of a replacement Coated Roadstone Plant and associated ancillary development to include bitumen storage tanks; aggregate and recycled asphalt pavement storage bays; hoppers; storage silos and conveyors” to determine awareness of potential future baseline at the site.

Assessment

2.8 During the site walkover on 9th February 2023 and discussion with site management it was ascertained that no additional blasting activity has occurred at the site since the previous site walkover in 2019. This is reaffirmed in the Planning, Design and Access Statement submitted by Northstone for the recently approved planning application (LA03/2022/0649/F) at the site.

2.9 A review of the Geindex database and ESCR determined that the information contained within the original 2014 assessment and the 2019 addendum remains accurate.

Conclusions

2.10 Given the review of the baseline information for the site and verification site visit, the conclusions reached in the original 2014 assessment and the 2019 addendum, remain valid.

2.11 The proposed development will not preclude further mineral extraction from the quarry site post decommissioning of the proposed plant. The construction of the development will involve regrading of the quarry shelves, but in comparison to the amount of rock that may be extracted from a fully functioning and permitted quarrying operation; the impact on geology is considered to be neutral.

2.12 There will be no significant adverse impacts on the geology, soils or agriculture on or surrounding the site provided the appropriate mitigation is followed.