

## **Detailed Planning Statement:**

Proposed Coarse Fishery  
Involving the Importation of Inert Material  
The Former Astwick Quarry  
Croughton  
Northamptonshire

September 2016

### **On Behalf of:**

Mr J Tredwell and Churchill Waste Management Ltd

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## 1. INDEX

<b>Section</b>	<b>Detail</b>	<b>Page No</b>
2.	Introduction .....	2
3.	The Applicants .....	2
4.	The Property .....	3
5.	The Proposed Development .....	3
6.	Pre-application Advice and Screening Opinion .....	5
7.	Planning History .....	6
8.	Planning Policy Framework .....	6
9.	Assessment of Environmental Impact .....	16
10.	Planning Assessment .....	24
11.	Summary .....	29

## APPENDICES

Appendix A	Croughton Site Location Plan
Appendix B	Croughton Red Line Plan 8346 2 A2
Appendix C	12/00013/WAS Decision Notice
Appendix D	NCC Conditions Checklist Astwick Quarry (2016.08.04)
Appendix E	Drawing Ref: FPV258/01
Appendix F	Croughton Lake Disabled Fishing Platform
Appendix G	Ecological Management Plan and Great Crested Newt Surveys
Appendix H	Flood Risk Assessment
Appendix I	Croughton Lake Transport Assessment
Appendix J	Hydrological Impact Assessment
Appendix K	Sound Analysis
Appendix L	Catchment Area for Inert Waste
Appendix M	Croughton Lake Package Treatment Plant

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 This Statement is submitted to accompany an application in full for the creation of 1 No. coarse fishery lakes with associated access, car parking, facilities building and stock ponds at the former Astwick Quarry, Croughton, Northamptonshire.
- 2.2 The application seeks permission to partially infill the former quarry to create 1 No. coarse fishery lakes (1 x 2.6ha) with associated access track, car parking, facilities building and stock ponds.
- 2.3 The application is in full and is accompanied by:-
- Detailed Planning Statement
  - Design & Access Statement
  - Ecological Management Plan and Great Crested Newt Survey – prepared by Turnstone Ecology Limited.
  - Transport Assessment – prepared by David Tucker Associates.
  - Hydrogeological Impact Assessment – prepared by S Belton MSci, MSc, FGS and H K MacLeod BSc, MSc, FGS of Hafren Water.
  - Flood Risk Assessment – prepared by Ian Brazier BEng (Hons) CEng MICE of Abington Consulting Engineers.
  - Waste Market Appraisal
  - Scaled Plans and Drawings of the proposed development.

## **3. THE APPLICANTS**

- 3.1 The applicants are Mr J Tredwell and Churchill Waste Management Ltd.
- 3.2 Mr J Tredwell's family have owned the farmland, including the application site at Croughton, for many years. Mr Tredwell is a local farmer with a mixed farm holding comprising arable and grassland, grazed by a combination of sheep and cattle. Mr Tredwell is seeking ways to diversify his traditional farming business and maximize the profitable use of his existing resources. The former Astwick Quarry site is of no benefit to the current agricultural operations and does not make a positive financial contribution to Mr Tredwell's farming business.
- 3.3 Churchill Waste Management Ltd are the Waste Management Subsidiary of Graham Churchill Plant Ltd, a local privately owned company. They are based in Silverstone, Northamptonshire and have been operating since 1967 in earth moving, haulage and plant hire. The company operates principally in Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire and North Oxfordshire. Over the last 25 years the company has operated or has been involved as sub-contractors with a number of waste disposal operations in Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes and neighbouring authorities. This has included licensed and exempt inert waste disposal operations.
- 3.4 Churchill Waste Management Ltd provides a service to the construction industry in the excavation and removal of material from development sites. Most of this material is inert, naturally occurring soils, rocks and clay. In providing this service, the company operates a fleet of 8-wheeled tipper lorries, this is essential to ensure that control can be exercised over vehicle routing and use of site wheel cleaning facilities. It has the further advantage of ensuring that a significant proportion of materials arriving at the site will come from known sources, often being loaded by the company's own excavating equipment.

#### **4. THE PROPERTY**

- 4.1 The site is located approximately 4km to the south west of Brackley and 2km to the east of Croughton village. It sits to the north of the B4031 passing from the A43 in the east and the village of Croughton to the west. The location plan can be found in [Appendix A](#).
- 4.2 Access to the site is via an existing access north from the B4031. The access is designed to a high standard and in compliance with the requirements of the extant of planning permissions relating to the existing infilling operations to the north and west of the proposed site.
- 4.3 The proposed development site extends to approximately 7.9ha of which 3.0ha is currently the old Astwick Quarry which is now partially infilled and surrounded by 4.9ha of rough grassland and woodland. The extent of the planning application site is edged blue on the site plan in [Appendix B](#).
- 4.4 The land does not currently form part of the applicant's farming operations, although sheep are grazed from time to time on the rough grassland surrounding the flooded quarry.
- 4.5 The old quarry, which is now partially infilled with inert material in accordance with planning permission 12/00013/WAS (attached at [Appendix C](#)). The former quarry is ideal for creating one large fishing lake.
- 4.6 A certain amount of planting was undertaken some 10 - 15 years ago, this planting of trees and shrubs is located primarily to the west, south west and south east of the old quarry.
- 4.7 An existing watercourse running north east to south west, is located to the west of the site. Another much smaller watercourse runs towards the site from the east, disappearing underground at a point to the east of the proposed site.
- 4.8 Existing access roads travel through the site to the existing recycling operation to the west and infill operation to the north.

#### **5. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1 The application seeks consent for the creation of 1 No. coarse fishing lake with associated access, car parking, facilities building and stock ponds. The development involves the importation of further inert waste material into the old quarry. The relevant environmental impacts of this stage of the development have been thoroughly assessed in the application. It was agreed that the application should be determined by Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste planning department as the proposed development involves the recovery of a waste material.
- 5.2 Following discussions with Northamptonshire County Council (NCC), it has been identified that the 2012 planning permission has been partially implemented, with non-compliance of extant planning conditions identified. Discussions with Dan Szymanski (NCC) culminated in a site meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and a checklist of condition requirements of the extant permission. Advice provided by NCC included submission of a new planning application to address the outstanding breaches, which is the purpose of this planning application. The checklist can be found attached at [Appendix D](#).
- 5.3 The proposed development site including the old quarry and surrounding land is not suitable for modern agricultural purposes. Extraction of limestone from the quarry ceased some 10 – 15 years ago. The old quarry gradually filled with groundwater and the surrounding land was partially

restored being sown to grass or planted with trees and shrubs. The grassland is of fairly poor quality due to the thin layer of topsoil and is drought prone. The land does not therefore lend itself to modern agricultural production. The grassland is an isolated area of grass surrounded by primarily arable land within the same ownership of the applicant.

- 5.4 The applicant has investigated a number of different enterprises that could possibly utilize the old quarry. Whilst the site is situated some 2km to the east of the village of Croughton, there are a number of residential properties in the hamlet of Astwick that lie just to the south west of the site in fairly close proximity to the site itself. Consequently, a number of enterprises that were considered by the applicants were deemed unsuitable due to the impact they would have on the amenity of the nearby residential properties.
- 5.5 Due to the fact that the old quarry is now partially infilled with inert material, an enterprise that utilizes a water resource is a favoured option. Water skiing and other forms of boating have been discounted due to their impact on the nearby residential properties. Some form of commercial fishery enterprise is therefore deemed the most appropriate re-use of this redundant facility.
- 5.6 The applicants sought advice from Mr Freeman FRICS of Fenn Wright who specialises in fisheries. Mr Freeman advised that the existing planning permission for 3 No. coarse fishing lakes was not the best use of the restored quarry for future angling use. The most popular form of fishing is for carp where anglers can have a choice of fishing positions which are at a sufficient distance to maximise the fishing experience.
- 5.7 The proposal is therefore to complete the partial infilling of the old quarry with inert material in order to reduce the depth. Therefore, the inert material will be used to create 1 fishing lake with an access path and reed fringed banks created around the outside of the water area. The proposed water level is 117m AOD as detailed on Drawing Ref: FPV258/01 in [Appendix E](#).
- 5.8 This will create 1 lake of approximately 2.6 ha in size with an average depth of approximately 1.5m. The bed of the lake will be landscaped to create deeper and shallower areas which provide a beneficial habitat for not only the coarse fish that will be stocked in the lakes, but also indigenous aquatic plants, amphibians, birds and invertebrates that form an essential part of a successful coarse fishery.
- 5.9 In order to reduce the depth of the old quarry, it requires the importation of inert material which will be placed into the old quarry, compacted and engineered to create the batters and causeways. The existing topsoil pile will be used as part of the infill of the quarry.
- 5.10 The estimated volume to complete the infilling of the quarry to create an average bed depth of 1.5m as indicated on plan FPV258/01 in [Appendix E](#) is approximately 16,250m<sup>3</sup> based on the topographical survey which was undertaken in April 2016.
- 5.11 At a conversion factor of 1m<sup>3</sup> to 1.7 tonnes of inert material this will require an importation of up to approximately 27,625 tonnes of material. At an annual import rate of 83,000 tonnes, this gives an estimated construction phase of 4 months.
- 5.12 Access into the development will be via the existing access off the highway. The existing temporary access into the quarry for infilling purposes will continue to be used. A permanent access to the car parking and facilities building will be constructed together with ancillary car parking off the existing farm track to the south west of the lake as shown on Drawing Ref: FPV258/001.

- 5.13 The access tracks and car parks will all be constructed out of imported crushed concrete and brick rubble. The main car park adjacent to the facilities building will provide for 20 cars. The secondary car park will provide for 5 cars as shown on the site plan at Appendix B.
- 5.14 A small facilities building is proposed to provide toilet and washing facilities for the fishermen and an equipment store for maintenance equipment required for the operation of the fishery enterprise. The facilities building will incorporate rainwater recycling to provide water for flushing the toilets and washing. The south facing roof will be constructed out of photovoltaic panels with backup battery storage to provide all of the electricity required by the facilities building. Consequently, the only service that will need to be installed to the facilities building is water for drinking purposes only. The facilities building will be constructed of timber under a profile sheeted roof. The roof furniture, including gutters and downpipes will be black plastic. Doors and windows will be black or dark brown UPVC. Foul drainage will be to a package treatment plant as detailed in [Appendix M](#), the plant will be licenced by the Environment Agency with drainage taken from the plant into the watercourse to the west of the development.
- 5.15 A certain amount of tree planting currently exists on the site extending from the east and west to the south of the old quarry. A temporary bund has been created out of screened topsoil for duration of the infilling operation and this provides both visual and acoustic screening for the residential properties located to the south west in the hamlet of Astwick.
- 5.16 It is proposed that there will be a total of 20 fishing positions of which 2 will be identified to allow access for disabled anglers. This is illustrated at [Appendix F](#). An access pathway around the lake will be surfaced with bark chip.
- 5.17 The lake will be stocked with predominantly Carp and operated as a day ticket fishery.
- 5.18 The proposal includes 3 stock ponds to be constructed on the area of land to be restored in the north eastern corner of the site as shown on site plan at [Appendix B](#).

## 6. PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE AND SCREENING OPINION

- 6.1 Following the discussions over non-compliance of conditions, and changed proposals, NCC have provided advice on regularising planning breaches, as outlined earlier in section 5.
- 6.2 During the previous planning application process, the applicant made a request for a formal screening opinion. NCC confirmed that under the Town & Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England & Wales) Regulations 1999 (as amended) Regulation 5 Screening Opinion, that the development does not constitute Environmental Impact (EIA) development and as such, an Environmental Statement will not be required to accompany an application for the proposal.
- 6.3 NCC have advised that a planning application for the proposed development would need to include a detailed assessment of the following:-
- Waste Market Appraisal (including proposed waste catchment area)
  - Ecology and Landscape
  - Local Amenity (particularly noise, traffic and dust)
  - Hydrology and Flood Risk
  - Highways and Traffic

- 6.4 An assessment of the infilling operations and their potential impact on existing local markets for the recovery and re-use of inert material is assessed in more detail in Section 10.

## **7. PLANNING HISTORY**

- 7.1 Permissions for limestone quarrying date back to the late 1950s (BRAR/58/84) and early 1960s (BRAR/60/77) when they were of comparatively limited size and duration. Further permissions for limestone extraction were granted in 1968 (BRAR/68/38) to Stone Hill Quarries, Peterborough, and in 1972 to RMC when for many years it was subsequently operated by its subsidiary companies, Butterley Aggregate and Hall Aggregates (Eastern Counties) Ltd.
- 7.2 In May 1989 South Northamptonshire Council granted permission (SN/89/229C) to John Mowlem & Co. Plc for the Extraction of limestone and clay/shale overburden and part backfilling with surplus excavated materials in connection with the M40 Motorway and Bicester Bypass road construction works.
- 7.3 The permission was subject to 24 conditions which included restoration and aftercare obligations. The permission covered two parcels of land; the site to the west of the stream and the application site to the east of the stream, north of the B4031.
- 7.4 It is understood that the volumes of surplus material arising from the road construction projects and available for backfill was significantly less than had been anticipated at the time of the application in 1989. In addition, soils and soil-making materials to supplement the very limited indigenous resource remaining on the area were not available for the proper restoration of the whole area.
- 7.5 Planning permission for the re-restoration of the western part of the old quarry and recycling operations was granted by South Northamptonshire Council on 14 September 2001, reference SN/99/560C. Subsequent to the granting of permission a number of detailed schemes were approved prior to the commencement of development in June 2002. These schemes covered Soils Translocation, Safe Reversing of Vehicles and Dust Management.
- 7.6 Planning permission for the extension of re-restoration works involving the deposit of inert soils on the northern part of the old quarry (S/2007/0318) was granted in May 2007 by Northamptonshire County Council.
- 7.7 Planning permission for Creation of three coarse fishing lakes for recreational purposes including access track, car and coach parking, facilities building and ancillary importation and infill of inert material was granted on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012 (ref: 12/00013/WAS).

## **8. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 8.1 The application site is not within any designated Special Landscape Areas or Conservation Areas. However, the proposal involves development within open countryside and as such, the following National Regional and Local Planning Policies apply:-

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW)
- Planning Practice Guidance
- Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (October 2014)

## 8.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and outlines the Government's planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF states that *"...proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and proposed development that conflicts should be refused unless other material considerations indicate otherwise"*.

Paragraph 14 states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF, which should be seen as the golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking.

Paragraph 17 sets out the twelve core planning principles which should underpin decision-making. These include:

- taking account of the different roles and character of different areas,
- recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
- contributing to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution;
- promotion of mixed use developments and encouraging multiple benefits from the use of land in rural areas.

Section 3 goes on to discuss ways in which planning can support a **prosperous rural economy**. The NPPF expects that a positive approach should be taken to sustainable new development and should help to promote diversification of agricultural businesses. It goes on to say that planning policies should support sustainable rural leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, which respect the character of the countryside.

Section 4 discusses **Sustainable Transport**. This expects suitable use of Transport Statements and Transport Assessments where necessary to ensure that there is safe and suitable access to the site and that improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.

Section 5 considers **good design**. Paragraph 56 states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Paragraph 61 goes on to say that planning decisions should also address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

Section 10 covers **the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change**. Paragraph 99 expects that new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the impacts arising from climate change, and paragraph 100 goes on to specify how development in areas at risk of flooding should be considered. This section details how the sequential and exception tests



should be utilised in decision-taking. Paragraph 103 considers the impact of flood risk elsewhere as a consequence of development and how local planning authorities can ensure that there is no increased flood risk.

Section 11 looks at **Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**. This section ensures that landscapes, soils, geology, ecosystems and net gains in biodiversity are protected. This includes “remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate” (paragraph 109).

Paragraph 118 sets out how local planning authorities should conserve and enhance biodiversity, listing six principles when determining planning applications. Paragraphs 120-125 go on to discuss pollution and land instability, ground conditions, noise, air quality and light pollution.

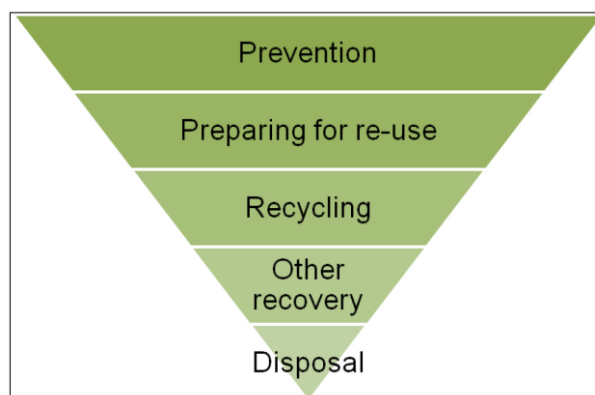
In particular, paragraph 122 states that “...local planning authorities should focus on whether the development itself is an acceptable use of the land, and the impact of the use, rather than the control of processes or emissions themselves where these are subject to approval under pollution control regimes. Local planning authorities should assume that these regimes will operate effectively.”

### 8.3 National Planning Policy Guidance for Waste (NPPW)

This document sets out the Government’s ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. It looks at waste management sites and how best to find suitable sites and areas.

8.3.1 Paragraphs 7 and 8 outline how waste planning authorities should determine planning applications. It looks at non-waste development, including making sure that the waste hierarchy and its implementation is not prejudiced, and does not affect the efficient operation of existing waste facilities. The third point in this section requires that “...the handling of waste arising from the construction and operation of development maximises reuse/recovery opportunities, and minimises off-site disposal.”

8.3.2 The waste hierarchy begins with Prevention, ending in disposal, being the least desirable solution where none of the other solutions are available. This is illustrated in the diagram below:



The NPPW also sets out a useful checklist for authorities when preparing waste plans and determining planning applications. The considerations are as follows:

- a. protection of water quality and resources and flood risk management*  
Considerations will include the proximity of vulnerable surface and groundwater or aquifers. For landfill or land-raising, geological conditions and the behaviour of surface water and groundwater should be assessed both for the site under consideration and the surrounding area. The suitability of locations subject to flooding, with consequent issues relating to the management of potential risk posed to water quality from waste contamination, will also need particular care.
- b. land instability*  
Locations, and/or the environs of locations, that are liable to be affected by land instability, will not normally be suitable for waste management facilities.
- c. landscape and visual impacts*  
Considerations will include (i) the potential for design-led solutions to produce acceptable development which respects landscape character; (ii) the need to protect landscapes or designated areas of national importance (National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Heritage Coasts) (iii) localised height restrictions.
- d. nature conservation*  
Considerations will include any adverse effect on a site of international importance for nature conservation (Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and RAMSAR Sites), a site with a nationally recognised designation (Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves), Nature Improvement Areas and ecological networks and protected species.
- e. conserving the historic environment*  
Considerations will include the potential effects on the significance of heritage assets, whether designated or not, including any contribution made by their setting.
- f. traffic and access*  
Considerations will include the suitability of the road network and the extent to which access would require reliance on local roads, the rail network and transport links to ports.
- g. air emissions, including dust*  
Considerations will include the proximity of sensitive receptors, including ecological as well as human receptors, and the extent to which adverse emissions can be controlled through the use of appropriate and well-maintained and managed equipment and vehicles.
- h. odours*  
Considerations will include the proximity of sensitive receptors and the extent to which adverse odours can be controlled through the use of appropriate and well-maintained and managed equipment.
- i. vermin and birds*  
Considerations will include the proximity of sensitive receptors. Some waste management facilities, especially landfills which accept putrescible waste, can attract vermin and birds. The primary aim is to guard against new or increased hazards caused by development. The most important types of development in this respect include facilities intended for the handling, compaction, treatment or disposal of household or commercial wastes.

*j. noise, light and vibration*

Considerations will include the proximity of sensitive receptors. The operation of large waste management facilities in particular can produce noise affecting both the inside and outside of buildings, including noise and vibration from goods vehicle traffic movements to and from a site. Intermittent and sustained operating noise may be a problem if not properly managed particularly if night-time working is involved. Potential light pollution aspects will also need to be considered.

*k. litter*

Litter can be a concern at some waste management facilities.

*l. potential land use conflict*

Likely proposed development in the vicinity of the location under consideration should be taken into account in considering site suitability and the envisaged waste management facility.

#### **8.4 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**

This document is designed to help practitioners, providing an indication of the Secretary of State's views alongside the NPPF and planning legislation.

The PPG sets out guidance and advice on a number of categories related to planning, including air quality, noise, waste and minerals and flood risk.

The PPG encourages Local Planning Authorities to consider these issues in terms of development management and how the proposed development might give rise to unacceptable impacts and how these fit with the planning decision and other legislation.

Minerals - Paragraph 1 provides an overview of minerals working and how this fits with planning regulation. This sets out the ways in which the specific needs and type of development related to minerals can affect planning decisions. This includes the expectation that land should be restored to make it suitable for beneficial after-use.

The PPG provides guidance on Assessing environmental impacts from minerals extraction, again making it clear that there are distinct planning and regulatory roles but which both complement each other in the control and management of minerals.

Paragraph 13 identifies the principle issues which should be addressed by mineral planning authorities:

- Noise associated with the operation
- Dust
- Air quality
- Lighting
- Visual impact on the local and wider landscape
- Landscape character
- Archaeological and heritage features
- Traffic
- Risk of contamination to land
- Soil resources
- Geological structure
- Impact on best and most versatile agricultural land

- Blast vibration
- Flood risk
- Land stability
- Internationally, nationally or locally designated wildlife sites, protected habitats and species, and ecological networks
- Impacts on national protected landscapes (National Park, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- Nationally protected geological and geo-morphological sites and features
- Site restoration and aftercare
- Surface and, in some cases, ground water issues
- Water abstraction.

Paragraphs 19-22 deal with the noise impacts from minerals extraction. It sets out ways in which operators should seek to control noise emissions, including assessing the likely noise impacts, monitoring and mitigation. In the same way, minerals authorities need to understand the extent of the impacts, and whether this will result in a significant adverse effect, an adverse effect or enable a good standard of amenity to be achieved.

Paragraph 22 discusses short-term activities and the noise limits which might be appropriate. It is accepted that there may be temporary increased noise limits for projects for up to eight weeks in a year; however, work taking longer may need to demonstrate a lower limit over that lower period. In cases where this is unavoidable, the higher limits may need to be permissible during a very limited time period.

Dust emissions also form part of these considerations. There are five stages applicable to a dust assessment study. Paragraphs 25-28 outline the four stages, with stage 5 providing the proposal which takes into account the dust assessment. Additional control measures may be necessary to address any impacts of dust it, within a site, the actual source of emission is in close proximity to any residential property or other sensitive use.

Another environmental impact to be considered is the quarry-slope stability. This is particularly relevant for the proposed restoration and re-use of the quarry. Any assessment needs to identify the potential hazards to people and property and environmental assets and assess its significance, and; identify any features which could adversely affect the stability of the working to enable basic quarry design to be undertaken.

Paragraph 36 and the subsequent paragraphs deal with restoration and aftercare of minerals sites. Paragraphs 45-49 look at after-use. The paragraphs after that deal with the use of suitable conditions for aftercare. There is guidance on the appropriate use of conditions, together on the limitations which should be imposed on aftercare conditions.

Part of after-use or aftercare includes landscape considerations. It is expected that a landscape strategy should be included in any application, including:

- Defining the key landscape opportunities and constraints;
- Considering potential directions of working, significant waste material locations, degrees of visual exposure etc.;
- Identifying the need for additional screening during operations;
- Identifying propose after uses and options for the character for the restored landscape.

Air Quality – Authorities need to consider the location and the activities which the development will create, and how this can adversely impact on air quality strategies or breach EU legislation. Planning authorities are expected to consider a number of steps to establish whether additional information on air quality is needed, and the best mitigation route to make the development acceptable. The PPG provides guidance on the information that might be required for air quality assessments, and when these are needed. The PPG also discusses mitigation and ensuring that development management does not overlap with other legislation.

Noise – This is more concerned with the effect levels and the extent to which there is a possible impact on health and wellbeing.

Waste – paragraph 45 expects close co-operation between counties and districts when determining waste applications.

## 8.5 Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2011-2031)

8.5.1 The Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework or NMWDF is the land use planning strategy for minerals and waste related development in the County. The Minerals and Waste Local Plan was adopted on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014. The Local Plan provides the basis for determining planning applications for, or covering, minerals and waste related development in Northamptonshire. This includes policies for decision-making, ensuring suitable control and management of development, including development criteria and locally specific issues.

This Local Plan comprises the following documents:

- **Policies Map** – to identify the sites and policies on a detailed map of the county.
- **Development and Implementation Principles Supplementary Planning Document** – this provides practical guidance concerning all other forms of development, as well as those specific to minerals and waste development.

8.5.2 The Local Plan looks at the Sustainable Community Strategy, and aligns these ambitions and aspirations alongside the policies governing minerals and waste.

8.5.3 Section 3 sets out the Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan. The vision includes “...*optimising the efficient use of mineral and waste resources...*”. The objectives set out the ways in which the overall vision is to be reached. The objectives relevant to the planning application are considered to be:

- 2: Sustainable minerals and waste development – this ensures the optimal use of resources and making sure that only that are really needed are used and that sustainable alternatives are used instead.
- 6: Efficient use and re-use of mineral resources – this objective looks at ensuring that new developments can make use of lower quality and previously used or non-minerals.
- 7: Safeguarding Northamptonshire’s mineral resources – this objective aims to ensure that present resources are not unnecessarily sterilised by other development.
- 9: Supporting local identity – This encourages the use of local building materials to help retain the local identity of the county.
- 10: Conserving and enhancing Northamptonshire’s built and natural environment – this objective takes into account environmental and natural assets and that gains are made through enhancing existing landscape and protecting it.

The following two objectives are the most relevant to the current application:

- 11: Responsible stewardship through restoration – this objective is the most relevant, stating that there should be “...an appropriate and beneficial after-use from mineral, and where appropriate waste development, through restoration that maximises enhancement opportunities, delivers a net gain in environmental capital and fosters responsible stewardship.”
- 12: Safe and healthy communities – this objective ensures that minerals and waste development can link up with recreational uses where this is practicable. It says that this will ensure that this type of development should help to “Preserve residential amenity, protect the health and safety of communities and promote recreational opportunities associated with minerals and waste development.”

The Local Plan goes on to outline how the vision and objectives can be achieved, setting out specific policies to address waste and minerals management and associated development.

**Section 5** of the Local Plan provides direction and policy on Strategy, Principles and Locations for Waste Related Development. The following policies are more of a strategic level however are relevant to the planning application. Waste management disposal capacity is broken down into various methods, outlined in Table 5 of the Local Plan. Inert recycling is set at 0.92m tonnes per annum.

This section goes on to look at the capacity shortfall and requirements in the County. This is illustrated at Table 6 of the Local Plan.

**Table 7: Indicative capacity gap**

Hierarchy level	Management method	Current capacity (2012) (million tonnes per annum)	Capacity gap (million tonnes per annum)			
			2016	2021	2026	2031
Preparing for re-use and recycling	Recycle	2.73	2.39	2.08	2.07	2.06
	Composting and anaerobic digestion	0.40	0.23	0.23	0.22	0.21
	Inert recycling	0.92	-0.09	-0.26	-0.31	-0.31
	Hazardous recycling	0.00	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02	-0.02
Other recovery	Advanced treatment	0.39	-0.46	-0.47	-0.50	-0.53
	Inert recovery / clean fill	1.08	0.69	0.00	-0.13	-0.14
	Hazardous treatment	0.17	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.06
Disposal	Non-inert landfill* (no residual / incl residual)	0.64	-0.01 to -0.18	-0.22 to -0.39	-0.46 to -0.60	-0.67 to -0.85
	Inert recovery / clean fill	1.08	0.69	0.00	-0.13	-0.14
	Hazardous landfill (no residual / incl residual)	0.25	0.23	0.09	0.09	-0.006 to -0.02

Note:

A negative, or red highlighting, indicates that the required capacity has not been met. Inert recovery / cleanfill is included in both ‘other recovery’ and ‘disposal’ as depending on the circumstance it may fall into either category however it has not been double counted in the totals.

\* For non-inert landfill there is a possibility that two sites may be mothballed (possibly in 2018), this would make the capacity gap: for 2016 -0.01 to -0.18, for 2021 -0.45 to -0.62, for 2026 -0.46 to -0.64 and for 2031 -0.67 to -0.85.

(Northamptonshire County Council (2014: 44)

The national guidance requires local allocation of sites which provide waste management capacity equivalent to at least ten years. This runs alongside the Waste Framework Directive. The Northamptonshire Local Plan allows for this ten-year supply by identifying specific sites and locations where waste management facilities would be suitable and through providing policies to aid decision-making when non-allocated sites come forward. These policies are listed throughout the Local Plan. The most relevant to the current application are outlined below.

**Policy 11: Northamptonshire’s waste management capacity**

The development of a sustainable waste management network to support growth and net self-sufficiency within Northamptonshire will involve the provision of facilities to meet indicative waste management capacity requirements during the plan period, including recycling. The indicative figures take into account the waste management hierarchy, anticipating 0.16 million tonnes per annum of inert fill or recovery to the periods 2021 and 2031. It is expected that the provision of sites will be via extensions, intensification of existing sites and including new sites. These would need to meet the spatial strategy and the environmental, amenity and other development considerations are acceptable.

**Policy 12: Spatial strategy for waste management**

This policy looks at the ways in which the County’s waste management network can be managed and focussed. It expects that in rural areas that facilities with a local or neighbourhood catchment will provide for preliminary treatment in order to deal with waste generated from these areas.

In the rural hinterlands only facilities with a local or neighbourhood catchment providing for preliminary treatment, or that are incompatible with urban development, should be provided. It is expected that facilities in rural areas should, where possible, be associated with existing rural employment uses.

**Policy 18: Strategy for waste disposal**

Policy 18 sets out the expected waste disposal capacity expected for the County through the plan period. This includes the expectation that inert waste disposal or recovery should be made at mineral extraction sites requiring restoration, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that an alternative location would not prejudice the restoration of these sites.

**Policy 20: Development criteria for inert waste disposal and recovery**

Proposals for the disposal or recovery of inert waste, where this does not relate to the restoration of a committed or allocated site for minerals extraction, must demonstrate that:

- It will not prejudice the restoration of mineral sites, and
- There is clear engineering, agricultural, landscape or recreation amenity justification for the development.

**Section 6:** of the Local Plan covers Local Planning Considerations, looking at the ways in which minerals and waste development proposals should be managed and how strategic aims can be delivered. This section provides more practical advice to the decision-taker, making more specific development management guidance. The policies relevant are set out below.

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

This policy expects that proposed developments must take into consideration the following:



- Protecting the natural resources, environmental and heritage assets;
- Avoiding and/or minimising potentially adverse impacts to an acceptable level from air/noise/chemical/ground/pest/environmental/land use conflict/cumulative impacts;
- Flood risk, including surface and groundwater;
- Built environment and its visual appearance having regard to the characteristics of the local area;
- Sustainable, safe and environmentally acceptable access;
- Protection of local amenity.

Suitable management plans should be developed where necessary.

**Policy 23: Encouraging sustainable transport**

This policy encourages the use of sustainable or alternative transport modes for development related to minerals and waste. This includes taking into account locations to the market or catchment areas and minimising transport distances and movements. Development which would result in a significant increase in transport movements may need a sustainable transport statement.

**Policy 24: Natural assets and resources**

The local plan looks for a net gain in natural assets and resources when assessing minerals and waste development. This should be through protection and enhancing existing assets including the green infrastructure and biodiversity networks; delivery of wider environmental benefits; contribution towards the Northamptonshire BAP targets for habitats. This policy requires assessments to identify the natural assets and resources and any potential impacts and to then identify any mitigation or compensation measures if required.

**Policy 25: Landscape Character**

This policy expects that minerals and waste development should seek to reflect Northamptonshire's landscape character. This should include mitigation during the development, its operational life, restoration, aftercare and after-use. Policy 25 also recognises that there should be opportunities for enhancement at the restoration, aftercare and after-use stages.

Development proposals will need to provide a landscape impact assessment where needed to identify the landscape values, the potential impacts, mitigation and opportunities for protection of enhancement.

**Policy 27: Layout and design quality**

This policy sets out five criteria which address the layout and design quality of the appearance of the development. The proposal needs to show that the development:

- Supports local identity and relates well to neighbouring sites and buildings;
- Is set in the context of the area in which it is to be sited in a manner that enhances the overall townscape, landscape or streetscape (as appropriate);
- Utilises local building materials as appropriate;
- Incorporates specific elements of visual interest; and
- Builds-in safety and security.

**Policy 28: Restoration and after-use**

This policy looks at the temporary minerals and waste development, expecting that these sites are progressively restored to an acceptable condition and stable landform. This policy accepts that



the restoration and after-use will be, to an extent, determined by the land use context, the surrounding environment and any specific local requirements. All after-use is expected to enhance biodiversity, the local environment and amenity and to benefit the local community and/or economy.

There are six criteria which restoration projects are expected to meet where appropriate. The most relevant of these to the current application are as follows:

- Precedence given to the establishment of the Biodiversity Action Plan habitat, including the biodiversity networks, promotion of geodiversity and enhancement of historic environment and heritage assets;
- Restoration to promote habitat enhancement in line with Biodiversity Action Plan targets and green infrastructure plans;
- Promotion of recreational facilities where there is a shortfall in nearby areas;
- Promotion of economic opportunities.

### **Policy 30: Sustainable design and use of resources**

This policy continues the theme of encouraging sustainable development through making best use of resources in construction and operations. The key points are:

- Minimising the use of primary aggregates, and encouraging the use of building materials from secondary and recycled sources;
- Construction and demolition methods that minimise waste production, and re-use and recycle materials (as far as practicable) on-site;
- The use of non-primary mineral construction materials, except where there is a need to protect and conserve the existing character of the area, which require traditional building materials (such as building and roofing stone),
- Design and layout that allows the sorting, recycling, biological processing and storage of waste, and
- Supporting the move to a low carbon economy by way of reduced greenhouse gas production through design and layout that incorporates energy and water efficiency, and where appropriate flood mitigation or attenuation measures.

The Local Plan sets out sites which have permission and are identified as being minerals or waste sites. Astwick Quarry is listed as a site with permission for the processing of secondary and recycles materials.

Appendix 4 goes on to list the commitments for waste management and disposal as at the end of 2012. Astwick Quarry is listed as an inert recycling facility for waste management with the permission (11/00012/WAS) ending on 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016 (Appendix 4a). The site is also listed at Appendix 4c of the Local plan, as a site for inert waste disposal. The relevant application here is 12/00013/WAS, with a permission end date of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

## **9. ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

### **9.1 Landscape**

- 9.1.1 In assessing the impact of the proposed development on the landscape, reference is made to Northamptonshire's Environmental Character and Green Infrastructure Suite.

- 9.1.2 This comprehensive study describes the physical environment of Northamptonshire to help planners, developers and the community understand how the present day landscape has evolved and how it functions. It is a wholly integrated survey and analysis of the Northamptonshire landscape. The guidelines support environmental policies in the Core Spatial Strategies for both north and west Northamptonshire and the green infrastructure strategy outlines the vision for green infrastructure in Northamptonshire and a strategic framework and master plan for green infrastructure delivery across the county.
- 9.1.3 The proposed development site is located within the **Croughton Plateau**. This is an elevated area of land in south east Northamptonshire that extends into neighbouring Oxfordshire. The plateau includes a consistent elevation of 130m AOD which is formed from a broad outcrop of Jurassic limestone. The flat land form combined with a limited tree cover and sparse settlement pattern ensure that wide views and a sense of openness are characteristic of the plateau landscape. The area is characterised by large and medium sized arable fields apart from a more intimate pastoral landscape evident in the vicinity of villages such as Charlton and Croughton. Hedgerows are showing signs of decline and developers are encouraged to maintain the network and to re-plant damaged or declining stretches. The US Airforce Communications Base at RAF Croughton imposes a distinctive utilitarian character to the local area, the Base is a significant local landmark with its system of masts and receivers forming prominent and distinctive features on the horizons. Woodland and screen belts are not characteristic and where screening is required, more sensitive naturalistic broad leaf copses should be planted.
- 9.1.4 With arable farming being the prominent land use, there is limited wildlife interest across the plateau.
- 9.1.5 An assessment of the current landscape classification places it within the **Limestone Plateau**. The limestone plateau has open expansive and sometime exposed character with long distance views to wide horizons. This is interspaced with low hedgerows or stone walls and limited woodland and tree cover. The strategies identified are to preserve the openness of the landscape character. Although sparse woodland cover is a characteristic of the area, there may be appropriate locations and opportunities to introduce limited new broad leaf woodlands within the plateau to provide further landmarks. Further woodland and tree planting may also be appropriate within the more diverse landscapes of the lower slopes and valley areas.
- 9.1.6 The current Landscape Character Assessment also identifies that where possible, the nature re-generation or planting of new hedge rows, should be encouraged to replace those that have been lost.
- 9.1.7 The proposed development does not propose any changes to the current landscape associated within the old Astwick Quarry which is now flooded to form a lake. The variation to the original permission, the subject of this planning application, retains the lake as a single facility. Therefore, there will be no significant change to the landscape. The overall plateau is at a height of 130m AOD, the finished top of bank will have a level of 118.2m AOD, consequently the site sits well below the overall plateau level and is not significantly visible in the wider landscape.
- 9.1.8 As part of the previous planning permissions, new hedgerows and woodland planting has taken place. Following discussions with NCC, no further planting is proposed.
- 9.1.9 The site falls within the **19th Century Parliamentary Enclosure** classification within the Historical Landscape Assessment, more specifically known as the **Syresham – Croughton Limestone Plateau**.

- 9.1.10 The strategies identified for the preservation of this historic landscape, include the conservation and enhancement of historic hedgerows and the restoration of lost hedgerow lines through ongoing maintenance of those planted as part of the previous scheme.
- 9.1.11 The biodiversity character assessment identifies the site to be located within the **Cropped Limestone Plateau**. The biodiversity character type for this area comprises isolated areas of mixed plantations and examples of lowland calcareous grassland. The semi-natural habitats are rare in a landscape dominated by large arable fields which are often surrounded by discontinuous wildlife or hedgerows that are a barrier to species dispersal. The most important habitat in this area is lowland calcareous grassland. It is accepted that mixed plantation woodlands do not make a major contribution to the biodiversity character. However existing woodlands should be conserved and extended and where possible, linked.
- 9.1.12 The proposed development will retain all original and more recent new woodland planting. This will also help to link the wet scrapes to the east of the development site to the watercourse located to the west.
- 9.1.13 There is a large area of calcareous grassland surrounding the quarry, this will be managed to ensure that areas of grassland are left completely undisturbed. This will encourage not only colonisation with rarer species of calcareous flora, but will also provide a valuable habitat for invertebrates in the areas surrounding the coarse fishing lakes. A thriving population of invertebrates in and around the coarse fishing lakes are essential for the overall wellbeing of the fish population and therefore contribute not only to the overall biodiversity of the site, but also the commercial operation itself.

## 9.2 Ecology and Biodiversity Enhancement

- 9.2.1 The proposed development is designed to achieve a number of objectives, including the re-use of a redundant quarry that has become flooded to create a valuable recreational facility, the diversification of the farming business to create a valuable source of non-agricultural income and the improvement and enhancement of the site, and its immediate environs for wildlife and conservation.
- 9.2.2 As part of the previous permission, an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey was carried out, and informed an Ecological Management Plan. Further to ongoing discussions and the revision to the proposed restoration to provide one, rather than three lakes, the Ecological Management Plan has been revisited and is attached at [Appendix G](#).
- 9.2.3 A Great Crested Newt Survey has also been carried out this year. A full copy of the survey can be found appended to the Management Plan at [Appendix G](#).
- 9.2.4 The report concludes that the calcareous grassland does contain several plant species of modest note, at present the grassland is not managed for ecological purposes and is occasionally mown to take a crop of hay. In the past it has been occasionally grazed by sheep.
- 9.2.5 The banks of the quarry which is now flooded, also support vegetation. The final profiles for the fishing lake will provide a substrate for establishing aquatic and semi-aquatic vegetation within the fishing lakes. There are opportunities for restoration of areas currently affected by the quarry infill activities as well as enhancement or reinstatement of habitats and creation.

- 9.2.6 A number of species were identified as present during the surveys both during the previous application and the most recent surveys, however there were no reptiles identified. The details of this are included in the Great Crested Newt Survey.
- 9.2.7 There will be no trees lost or damaged as part of the development and as such, bats will not be impacted. The proposed and updated Ecological Management Survey takes into account some of the ecological measures which have been undertaken to date.
- 9.2.8 It is found that a number of elements for the restoration of the quarry to form the lake presents the potential to support the objectives of the Northamptonshire local Biodiversity Action Plan (LABP). In particular, the contributions of the scheme to the BAP will be towards:
- Retention of existing wet woodland
  - Creation of new pond habitats
  - Development of tall grassland areas
  - Retention of calcareous grassland.
- 9.2.9 In turn, these contributions have helped to inform the ecological management of the site, which is divided into management compartments. These are:
1. Wet Woodland
  2. Northern Grassland
  3. Southern Grassland
  4. Quarry Void.
- 9.2.10 The significant benefits of the ecological appraisals and surveillance have identified the following key areas of note:
- Opportunities for increasing intrinsic nature conservation;
  - Enhancement of the potential for use by reptiles and ground nesting birds;
  - Protection and enhancement of part of the site;
  - Increase the potential value to variety of notable fauna species.
- 9.2.11 By reducing the surface water area and depth of water to create **one** lake will significantly improve the habitat for fish, aquatic plants and invertebrates and birds and mammals. The areas of grassland and woodland will be enhanced and managed for the benefit of flora and fauna.
- 9.2.12 Although the development will be operated as a commercial coarse fishery, it is extremely important that the environment of the fishery itself is both attractive and functional, fishermen will not be attracted to a fishery that is spartan and unattractive therefore the commercial success of the enterprise will depend heavily on how the environment of the fishery is managed.
- 9.2.13 Furthermore, fishermen will only pay for fishing if they are able to catch fish. Fish will only be caught where there is a healthy and thriving population. They are completely dependent upon the natural environment for their food and therefore a healthy population of aquatic plants and invertebrates is essential for the commercial success of the fishery. This will only be achieved if the fishery is managed for the benefit of wildlife and conservation, as well as its commercial objectives. The two are intrinsically linked and the success of one is wholly dependent upon the other.

9.2.14 The management plan identifies the characteristics and opportunities for each management compartment and identifies the best ways to achieve biodiversity gain. The overall management system is supported by key implementation tasks and a timetable for 2017.

### 9.3 Great Crested Newts

9.3.1 Detailed Great Crested Newt Surveys were carried out in 2011 as well as the following dates:-

- 9<sup>th</sup> May 2016
- 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016
- 16<sup>th</sup> May 2016
- 1<sup>st</sup> June 2016

9.3.2 The surveys carried out this summer (2016) covered a number of period to follow the recommended guidelines for survey methods (torching, bottle trapping, egg searches or netting) for each pond at and close to the application site.

This survey did not record any Great Crested Newts during any of the surveys and it is concluded that they are not present in the three ponds surveyed and unlikely that they are on site. There are ponds to the south of the site, however due the distance and type of habitats around this southerly ponds, it is stated that it is unlikely that Great Crested Newts would be present in terrestrial habitat immediately around the quarry.

The guidance from English Nature states that the maximum migratory range is estimated as approximately 250m from a breeding pond. These ponds to the south are located at least this distance away, and one of the barriers includes the B4031 road between the application site and these additional ponds.

Ponds 1 and 3 (the smaller ponds to the east and west of the main quarry lake) were found to have populations of Smooth Newt, Common Toad and Common Frog.

9.3.3 The development scheme has therefore been designed to minimise any invasive works over the grassland between the existing access tracks and the quarry itself. A short length of access track will be installed from the site entrance to the quarry to provide access for vehicles carrying infill material. This access is detailed on plan 8346/1 in [Appendix B](#).

Turnstone Ecology find that there is no requirement specifically for Great Crested Newts. However, advice is provided that work must stop immediately should any Great Crested Newts be found.

9.3.4 Turnstone Ecology have assessed the proposed work and conclude that there will be no direct effect on the ponds used by Toads and no habitat fragmentation. The work will be undertaken in a way that is sympathetic to the habitat requirements for Toads and refuges will be left undisturbed and open excavations (if required) will not be left open overnight or will have graded banks or other suitable ways for Toads to exit.

Turnstone Ecology note the enhancement value to ecology arising from the development. This will provide some habitat for some species such as the Common Toad and there are opportunities to crease shallower pools suitable for use by amphibians which are not stocked by fish.

The resultant grassland and scrub will require minimal management and will be suitable for terrestrial amphibians. There are opportunities to allow some areas to be undermanaged to help create refuges and habitats from wilder areas, old timber and stone.

#### **9.4 Flood Risk Assessment**

9.4.1 A Flood Risk Assessment for the proposed development has been carried out by Abington Consulting Engineers. Their report dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2016 can be found in [Appendix H](#). The assessment has been carried out in compliance with NPPF and NPPG. The proposed development has been assessed against the Sequential Test as set out in the NPPG and the development complies with the requirements of this test as being appropriate or compatible development in Flood Zone 1.

It is concluded that the revised capacity of the lake (as opposed to three) will not compromise the attenuation requirement of the existing catchment.

It is shown that there will be no increase in surface water run-off from the application site and there will be no off-site impact from the development with regards to flood risk. In addition, the ground levels will not be raised and as such the flood plan storage will not be lost or displaced.

Combined with these findings, the Abigton FRA concludes that the appropriate drainage management will ensure that the development itself will be safe from surface run-off and that it will not increase run-off.

Surface water drainage proposals provide gravel surfaces of the access and car park together with a permeable swale adjacent to the car park. This will enable surface water to soak away during minor rainfall events, and the swale will support any additional surface water which cannot soak through the car park surface during heavier and major rainfall events.

9.4.2 The assessment concludes that the proposed development complies with the requirements of the Sequential Test and that no significant on or off-site flood risks have been identified.

The Abington report provides full calculations and mapping to support the findings.

#### **9.5 Transport & Highways**

9.5.1 A Transport Assessment was undertaken by David Tucker Associates (DTA). The assessment reviews the traffic implications arising from the proposed development including the temporary impact during the infilling operations and any longer term impact as a result of operating the commercial coarse fishery. A copy of the Transport Assessment can be found in [Appendix I](#).

9.5.2 In order to inform the assessment two traffic surveys were undertaken, these were as follows:-

- Automatic Traffic Count (ATC) on the B4031 to the east of the site access for period 16th – 22nd September 2011.
- Manual count of vehicles turning into the site on Tuesday the 20th of September 2011.

9.5.3 DTA were made aware of the extant permissions currently relating to the land located immediately adjacent to the proposed development site. These existing developments use highways access from the B4031 directly into the site. The proposed development will use the same access.

- 9.5.4 The assessment considers the amount of vehicle movements that will be generated as a result of the proposed development in accordance with Planning Permission 12/00013/WAS. It concluded that the number of vehicle movements into and out of the site will not increase over and above those that are currently generated by the existing operations. The report assessed the likely vehicle movements that will be generated by the coarse fishery enterprise. During the week it is likely that the facility will be used by local recreational fishermen. The lake was originally proposed to have 60 fishing platforms, although it was anticipated that during the week, a maximum of 20 fishermen per day will use the facility.
- 9.5.5 The report concludes that the original proposed development will not cause any significant increase in traffic flows on a daily basis over that historically or currently generated by the site, the importation of inert fill will extend the current number of vehicle movements associated with this operation for a period of 3 years. Thereafter, the level of additional traffic generated by the coarse fishery enterprise is modest.
- 9.5.6 The revised proposal for one lake with 20 pegs will reduce the traffic movements by approximately one third.
- 9.5.7 There are no adverse issues arising from the development and therefore no off-site improvements are deemed necessary.
- 9.5.8 Furthermore, the proposals will not result in any detrimental impact on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network.

## 9.6 Hydrological Impact Assessment

- 9.6.1 A Hydrological Impact Assessment (HIA) has been undertaken by Hafren Water, a copy of the report can be found in [Appendix J](#).
- 9.6.2 The principal objectives of the study were to:-
- Determine base line conditions in relation to the water environment at Croughton fishing lake and its surroundings.
  - Determine a conceptual model for the site.
  - Identify the likely impacts associated with the proposed development.
- 9.6.3 The proposed development involves the dewatering of the old quarry, infilling with inert material which will be engineered and landscaped to create three fishing lakes. The proposed works could have an impact on ground water. The report assesses in detail whether the proposed temporary works and the long term operation of the eventual use, have any detrimental impact on ground water in and around the development site.
- 9.6.4 In order to fully assess the current situation with regard to ground water, a series of boreholes were drilled on site. The borehole logs and their analysis are detailed in the assessment.
- 9.6.5 The assessment identifies the geology of the development site itself and also, that of the surrounding area. Having determined what geological formations are present, using information from existing standard data and the results of the borehole survey, it is possible to predict what impact the proposed development will have upon ground water in the locality.



- 9.6.6 The report concludes that there are a range of hydraulic conductivities across the development site and that these are within the range expected for the observed geology. This information has been used to calculate the likely inflow of ground water into the quarry, it is therefore possible to determine the volume of water that must be removed from the void in order to ensure that the void is fully de-watered during the infilling phase.
- 9.6.7 The estimated maximum discharge rate required to maintain a dry working area is calculated to be approximately 30l/s.
- 9.6.8 The water removed from the quarry will be discharged into the watercourse running to the west of the development site. The water will be pumped initially into a settlement pond in order to remove any suspended solids prior to discharging into the watercourse. The report concludes that this is unlikely to have any detrimental impact on the watercourse itself.
- 9.6.9 Furthermore any potential reduction in water flow through the watercourse due to the de-watering operation and the subsequent local of lowering ground water levels, will be offset downstream through the discharge of water from the quarry itself.
- 9.6.10 The local geology is such that the temporary dewatering and permanent exclusion of water from the void once infilling operations are complete, are also unlikely to have any impact on local ground water levels.
- 9.6.11 The assessment has also considered the risk to groundwater in the event of spillage during the infilling operation and concludes that adherence to best practice and measures incorporated into the development plans such as the settlement lagoons and the provision of on-site spill kits, will significantly limit the potential extent of the pollutants travel and therefore the residual impact is assessed as low.
- 9.6.12 The proposed development is likely therefore to have a temporary local impact on ground water levels, however the impact is deemed as low and will not have detrimental impact on either the environment or any third parties.

## **9.7 Noise and Dust**

- 9.7.1 It is not anticipated that the development will have any adverse impact on the local environment from noise or dust.
- 9.7.2 The infilling operation will be carried out within the redundant quarry and as such all plant and machinery will be working below ground level. Noise assessments have previously been carried out and submitted with previous planning applications referred to in Section 7. The current operations including the recycling plant and infilling operation immediately adjacent to the proposed development site, do not cause any adverse impact on the amenity of the closest residential dwellings.
- 9.7.3 Noise
- 9.7.3.1 Access into the redundant quarry for the purposes of tipping the imported inert infill will be via the existing highways access and then via a short section of temporary track to be constructed out of crushed stone, topped with road planings directly into the redundant quarry.



- 9.7.3.2 Most of the imported inert infill will be tipped directly into the infill site and levelled. If the loads contain a percentage of top soil, the load will be screened. The screener will be identical to the screening equipment currently utilised on the existing infill site located to the north. Sound analysis for the screening machine can be located in [Appendix K](#).
- 9.7.3.3 Noise will be monitored during the infilling phase to ensure that the noise levels are acceptable and do not cause any unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of the dwellings at Astwick.
- 9.7.3.4 There will be no unacceptable level of noise generated by the coarse fishery enterprise. The car-parking area will be located on the northern bank of the lakes with the new access track running along the northern boundary of the development site.
- 9.7.3.5 The operation of a coarse fishery does not generate any noise; it is by its very nature a quiet form of recreational activity.
- 9.7.4 Dust
- 9.7.4.1 The infilling operation will not create any unacceptable levels of dust. All roadways will either be surfaced with concrete or road planings, neither of these surfaces give rise to levels of dust.
- 9.7.4.2 The infilling operation will be undertaken below ground level. Furthermore, the prevailing wind will be blowing across the development site, away from the residential dwellings in Astwick. Therefore, there would be no risk of any dust impacting on the residential amenity of those dwellings, even in the unlikely event that any dust was created.

## 10. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The proposal is to create a recreational facility which comprises 1 No. coarse fishery lake with associated facilities building, access, car parking and stock ponds. The proposal also involves the ancillary infilling of the existing quarry with inert materials in order to create the coarse fishery lake.

### 10.1 Principle of Development

Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that a presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of planning policy, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking.

One of the core planning principles of the NPPF is the promotion of mixed use developments and encouraging multiple benefits from the use of land in rural areas.

The Waste Management Plan for England sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. This expects planning to help to deliver the waste targets and implement the waste hierarchy. This includes "...*helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment...*" (National Planning Policy for Waste, 2014).

The Local Plan's key objectives which include Responsible stewardship through restoration and Safe and healthy communities look at the opportunities from after-use and restoration of redundant waste or minerals sites. This includes recreational as well as environmental opportunities.

The proposed development represents the re-use and after-use of a redundant quarry, making use also of inert materials to facilitate the development. It represents a sustainable use which is appropriate in a rural area and has regard to its location, and possible impacts from traffic, to wildlife and ecology and other material considerations including impacts to human health.

It is submitted that the proposed fishing lake is inherently a sustainable proposal which has regard to the policies of the NPPF, National Planning Policy for Waste and the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. As such the development is acceptable in principle.

## **10.2 Water Quality and Resources and Flood Risk Management**

The previous planning application included a flood risk assessment for the three lakes. The subject application includes a new FRA to take into account any climatic changes and the revision to the re-use of the quarry to provide only one lake. The reports have concluded that the proposal is appropriate development in Flood Zone 1 and suitable drainage measures are proposed.

The NPPF expects that new developments do not increase vulnerability to the impacts from climate change and risk of flooding, and this is also covered by the NPPW and PPG. Policy 22 follows national policy guidance in the same way, expecting the same standards of consideration of all minerals and waste development to flood risk, surface and groundwater impacts.

We submit that the proposal is appropriate development within Flood Zone 1 and it represents appropriate surface water drainage measures to ensure that the development does not pose a threat from increase run-off either to or from the development. There are suitable measure proposed which follow the requirements of the SUDS Hierarchy. Therefore, the proposal is compliant with national and local policy.

## **10.3 Land Instability**

The proposal includes minimal re-grading of the sides of the lake. Topographical data has been provided to demonstrate the final levels of the site.

It is submitted that there is no danger of land instability to the site, its users or neighbouring land uses.

## **10.4 Landscape and Visual Impacts**

All of the construction work will be below the level of the surrounding ground, therefore there will be little visual impact during the construction phase. Once the work is completed the site will be left landscaped to enhance the setting of the fishing lake and thus there will be a long term benefit to the appearance of the area. A formal restoration scheme is not required in this case as all surface works are included in the application and will contribute to the final restoration and improvement of the site, incorporating the temporary bund, and final car and coach parking, the facilities building and small path round the lake.

## **10.5 Nature Conservation**

- 10.5.1 It is recognised by the applicants that the proposed site already contains habitats that are of benefit to both flora and fauna. The ecological reports referred to in Paragraph 9.2 and [Appendix G](#) have identified those existing habitats that are of benefit and also, the species found within them.

- 10.5.2 Section 11 of the NPPF addresses Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment.
- 10.5.3 The creation of one lake with islands and a bar will improve the aquatic habitat by reducing the depth of water which will encourage colonisation of aquatic plants and invertebrates. Furthermore, the proposal involves the creation of a reed fringe around the lake for the benefit of local diversity and wildlife.
- 10.5.4 The proposed development has been designed specifically the ecological enhancement benefits and opportunities in mind, whilst a significant objective is to create a development that is commercially viable, an important objective is also to enhance the natural environment for the benefit of biodiversity and wildlife. This significant improvement in local habitat will also benefit the commercial viability of the development as an enhanced level of aquatic plants and invertebrates is beneficial to the coarse fish that will be stocked in the lakes. Furthermore, a fishery that is not only aesthetically attractive but also containing a significant amount of interesting wildlife, is also more likely to attract leisure fishermen.
- 10.5.5 It is submitted that the likely enhancement opportunities represent a net gain in biodiversity, supporting habitats and enhancing possible habitats for species noted on site. This element of the proposal clearly has regard and complies with the policies of the NPPF at Section 11. The Local Plan also expects a net gain in natural assets and resources when assessing waste and minerals development. It has been demonstrated that the proposals represent opportunities to continue to manage and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure at the site, helping connectivity with the wider wildlife habitats and networks. We therefore conclude that the proposal has regard to the NPPF and Policy 24 of the Local Plan.

## **10.6 Traffic and Access**

The revised proposal for one lake with 20 pegs will reduce the traffic movements by approximately one third as assessed for the original scheme under 12/00013/WAS. There will be no adverse highways or traffic issues and no detrimental impacts on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network.

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

It is therefore submitted that the proposal has regard to the requirements of Section 4 of the NPPF, the NPPW, PPG and Local Plan Policies.

## **10.7 Air Emissions, Dust and Noise**

The PPG and the NPPF discuss material planning considerations. Dust and noise are included, including using suitable control measures to address any impacts of dust and noise mitigation.

As set out previously, all plant and machinery will be working below ground level to provide the infilling and the roadways will be surfaced with concrete or road planings which will ensure limited or no rising levels of dust.

As such, it is concluded that there will be no risk of dust impact on residential amenity to nearby dwellings or the health of occupiers.

The noise will be monitored during the infilling phase to ensure that the levels are acceptable and do not cause unacceptable impacts on nearby dwellings. The proposed development to provide the fishing lake is not considered to produce noise that would be harmful to residential amenity.

Therefore, it is considered that the proposed development has regard to policy with reference to noise and dust impacts.

## **10.8 Re-use of the Quarry and Provision of Recreation Facilities**

The applicant's farming business is currently reliant upon arable and livestock farming for its core source of income. Agricultural incomes are increasingly under pressure and there is a well-established need for farming businesses to generally increase in size and scale in order to remain economically viable. A major constraint to a farming business increasing in size and scale is the lack of available land and the high capital cost associated with its purchase. Opportunities to rent extra land are rare and rental values remain high due to the high level of competition from existing landowners.

10.8.1 Consequently Mr Tredwell has assessed all of his property assets and has identified those that are not contributing to the economic viability of his business. The redundant quarry at Astwick is one of those property assets identified. As detailed in Section 5, a number of alternative diversification opportunities have been considered and discounted by the applicant. It was felt that a coarse fishery enterprise would allow the applicant to diversify and make better use of an existing property asset.

This approach is supported by the NPPF, which accepts that the rural economy needs to look at diversification projects away from agricultural operations alone. Section 3 recognises that planning can and should support a prosperous rural economy. This includes supporting sustainable rural leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, which respect the character of the countryside.

The National Planning Policy for Waste explains that the ongoing assessment of available sites for waste and minerals must be matched with the re-use of sites and disposal of waste without endangering human health or the environment.

This is reflected in the local policy too. Within the visions of the Local Plan, Objective 12 includes recognition that minerals and waste development can provide opportunities for recreation. At present, the redundant quarry does not provide any beneficial recreational facility, it has already been demonstrated that it does not contribute to the agricultural business and the land is therefore largely redundant for any use apart from the occasional grazing with livestock.

Whilst it is recognised that the development is not immediately adjacent to an existing settlement, the Transport Assessment has assessed the amount of vehicle movements associated with the eventual use, namely, a coarse fishery enterprise and has determined that due to the nature of the recreational activity, this will not generate a significant amount of vehicle movements.

10.8.2 The development of the coarse fishery involves the infilling of the quarry to create a depth that is suitable for the creation of a coarse fishery. The infilling involves the importation of inert waste onto the site.

- 10.8.3 The most important Policies relating to the infilling operation are those contained within the Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework (NMWDF) as set out in Paragraph 8.10.
- 10.8.4 The Framework contains three documents of particular relevance to this proposed development.
- 10.8.5 The development is re-using a waste resource in the form of inert fill to make viable a recreational development that would otherwise be almost impossible to create without the use of the waste infill. By re-using the waste material to reduce the depth of the quarry and therefore creating one coarse fishing lake that is suitable for purpose, the development is ensuring that the waste material is put to beneficial use as set out in one of the objectives. The restoration of the quarry also delivers a net environmental gain.
- 10.8.6 Astwick Quarry is identified in the Local Plan as a site with planning permission for the processing of secondary and recycled materials. Given that the existing infill operation to the north of the proposed site has established the infrastructure required for its operation, the proposed site would be highly sustainable as it would make use of the existing infrastructure.
- 10.8.7 The catchment area from which appropriate inert waste will be sourced is attached at [Appendix L](#).
- 10.8.8 The Waste Recovery Permit that will be required from the Environment Agency will limit the source of the inert waste to soils from uncontaminated sites, which will predominantly mean that they will have to come from Greenfield developments or from residential schemes built on Greenfield sites. This limit will be imposed due to the placing of the material where it will come into contact with groundwater. The site operator will therefore require as large an area as possible from which to source the material if the construction work is to be completed within the projected 3 year timescale.
- 10.8.9 The proposed operator for the site is based in Silverstone, Northamptonshire. The catchment area has therefore been drawn to reflect its existing customer base and the general operating area. It has also been drawn to reflect the fact that the site is at the focal point of a number of strategic highways namely; the A43, A4222, A421 and the M40. These routes provide quick and easy access to the site from the identified catchment area, minimising the distance that lorries would need to travel on country roads. The success of the restoration scheme on the adjoining land by the proposed operator, demonstrates that there is likely to be sufficient material available for the proposed scheme from the area within which the company work.
- 10.8.10 The development must also comply with Policy 27 (Layout and design quality) of the Local Plan. A separate Design & Access Statement is included with the planning application to address these issues in respect of the only built development that is required, namely the small facilities building for use by the coarse fishery enterprise. No structures will be required on site during the construction phase as existing facilities used by the operator will continue to be used. There is therefore no need for a formal Design Statement in this case.
- 10.8.11 The use of waste material for the construction project is a reflection of the need to avoid the use of primary minerals. The volume to be used is dictated by the design criteria for the construction of one fishing lake, thus ensuring that only the minimum volume is utilised.
- 10.8.12 The establishment of the commercial fishery on the site will secure its long term maintenance for the overall benefit of the appearance of the area and the ecological enhancements that have been dealt with elsewhere within this report.

## **11. SUMMARY**

- 11.1 The application as presented relates to the development of a coarse fishery enterprise which will provide a valuable local facility for recreational fishermen. The development involves the infilling of a redundant quarry with inert material in order to reduce the depth and create one attractive fishing lake.
- 11.1.1 The development will also incorporate car-parking areas and a facilities building providing toilets, washing facilities and secure storage for equipment associated with the development.
- 11.1.2 The development will make use of an existing highways access.
- 11.1.3 The infilling operation is temporary and ancillary to the main use. The infilling will be undertaken by one of the applicants who already operates a recycling and infilling operation located immediately to the west and north of the application site.
- 11.1.4 The impact of the development has been assessed in detail and surveys and assessments have been completed with regard to ecology, transport, hydrogeology and flood risk. These surveys and assessments have been carried out in accordance with established principles and the conclusions have enabled the applicants to propose a scheme that has little or no adverse impact on the environment. The ecological assessment has in particular, identified a number of areas where the development will deliver enhancements for local wildlife and conservation.
- 11.1.5 The proposed development has been assessed against National, Regional and Local Planning Policies. The report concludes that the proposed development complies with those Policies.
- 11.1.6 The coarse fishery enterprise has been designed to provide a valuable facility for disabled anglers. At present, the proposal is to construct 2 disabled fishing platforms, if the demand from disabled angling clubs such as the British Disabled Angling Association and the Disabled Angling Association proves to be greater than the provision proposed, more of the platforms will be converted for disabled access.
- 11.1.7 The infilling operation is ancillary to the main use and is only of a temporary nature. The operation has been assessed against National and Local Planning Policies and is deemed compliant.
- 11.1.8 The proposed recreational facility will fulfil a local demand whilst utilising a redundant quarry and the re-use of inert waste material. The proposed development is therefore highly sustainable and we therefore dutifully request that planning permission is granted.



**Rebecca Lock MRTPI MRICS  
September 2016**