

Land north of North Park, Richings Park, Buckinghamshire SL0 9DJ – Speech for Development Control - Committee 10th April 2017

Proposal –Temporary closure of public footpath IVE/15/1, followed by the laying out of a site entrance, erection of new processing and concrete plants and related infrastructure, extraction of 2 million tonnes of sand and gravel, backfilling with inert material and progressive restoration of the land to agriculture over a period of nine years.(Application Number CM/51/16)

Dear Chairman and Members

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today. I am here with my colleagues Andy Scott, Estates Manager for CEMEX, Mark Kelly, Planning Manager for CEMEX and Henry Andrews, Ecological Consultant from Andrews Ecology.

The key reason CEMEX has submitted this application for decision today, rather than wait for the site to be allocated as a Preferred Area in the forthcoming Replacement Minerals Plan, is the proposed national infrastructure project for a rail link between the west and Heathrow. The Western Rail Link to Heathrow (or WRLtH project, as it is known) will spur off the Great Western Railway line to the north of this CEMEX site and go into tunnel in the middle it. The proposed timetable for this Network Rail scheme, if the Development Consent Order is granted, is to start work in 2020.

As such, CEMEX need to start extraction ahead of the WRLtH scheme. If planning permission is granted today, a start date at the beginning of 2018 is possible. This will enable CEMEX to recover the sand and gravel and avoid sterilisation of the mineral that will either be in the path of the rail tunnel or will be impossible to reach once the tunnel is in place.

This site is identified within the mineral safeguarding area within the current Buckinghamshire Minerals Local Plan. National and local planning policies recognise that minerals can only be worked where they are found and it is sustainable to recover these finite resources now rather than see them sterilised by non mineral development, such as WRLtH.

CEMEX has worked with Network Rail and discussed the timing, design and phasing of the minerals working. If planning permission is secured now, the mineral can be recovered ahead of the WRLtH project and possible synergies between the two schemes realised. Synergies such as the potential

provision of concrete for WRLtH and the use of the tunnelling inert waste to fill and restore the mineral void created. If the synergies are realised this could significantly reduce the HGV movements stated in this application, which represent a standalone and worst case scenario.

Network Rail and CEMEX have signed a S106 Agreement to ensure that they work together and that this minerals development will not prevent the WRLtH from going ahead.

CEMEX are also willing to sign a S106 routing agreement to ensure that HGV traffic goes west along North Park and then south along Sutton Lane to the A4.

The sand and gravel recovered from this site is needed and will contribute to the future aggregates supply for housing and construction projects. If, permitted the minerals will sustain aggregate production within the current adopted Buckinghamshire Mineral Plan period, where the landbank is expected to fall below the 7 years minimum level by 2019, if new sites are not permitted.

CEMEX understand that residents have concerns about mineral working. This application is supported by an environmental impact assessment, including assessments on noise, dust, landscape, hydrology, air quality and traffic. These assessments have shown that with the mitigation measures in place there are no significant adverse impacts on the closest residential properties or the communities of Richings Park, Iver or Langley. Predicted noise levels, for the closest properties are within national planning noise limits for mineral working.

There are no statutory consultee objections to the proposed development on these matters. Conditions are in place to ensure the Planning Authority has control on noise, dust, traffic and lighting.

This proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It will be temporary and preserve openness. All plant will be removed and the site restored back to existing levels, to high quality agricultural land. The proposal will result in the loss of some local ecological features, but this will be offset this by the creation of new hedgerows, woodland and water features. In addition, two new footpaths will be provided. Overall the scheme offers a net increase in biodiversity of some 5.4 hectares.

(In conclusion CEMEX consider that this proposal is sustainable development, which avoids safeguarded mineral from being sterilised unnecessarily and meets the aggregate landbank needs of Buckinghamshire during the current plan period.)

In light of the above and the detailed analysis set out within the officer's report we urge you to endorse your officer's recommendation.

I would be happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Thank you for your time.

Helen Hudson

Consultant Planner

CEMEX

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