

7. FULL APPLICATION: PROPOSED SOUTH WESTERLY EXTENSION TO ONCE A WEEK QUARRY TO EXTRACT 69000 TONNES OF LIMESTONE (AT A RATE OF 2500 TONNES PER ANNUM), RETENTION OF EXISTING STONE CROPPING SHED/OFFICE/STORE WITH RESTORATION TO HAY MEADOW NP/DDD/0714/0739, M3353, 29/07/2014, 415743/368009/NH)

APPLICANT: Mandale Stone Company Ltd

Site and Surroundings:

Once-a-Week Quarry is situated approximately 2 miles south west of Sheldon, off the road to Chelmorton (Flagg Lane). The existing quarry lies south of the road, behind a tree belt running parallel to the road. The quarry covers approximately 1.2 hectares in area. This includes the existing quarry excavation, product storage area, quarry tip, sawing shed and associated buildings and a pond within the quarry. The quarry tip has been re-graded to surrounding ground levels and a topsoil storage mound is located on the tipped material. To the north of the tip is a small rectangular field/paddock contained within the site boundary.

The total site area including the existing quarry, adjoining extension area and site access road covers 2.58 Ha. The proposed extension to the limestone quarry is situated to the south of the current quarry face. The proposed extension area comprises a single hay meadow to the south of the existing quarry, which is surrounded by dry stone walls. There are two mine shafts within the field. The surface of the land is owned by the Peak District National Park Authority and the mineral is owned by the Chatsworth Settlement.

The 'Monyash Round' footpath runs through fields to the east and west of the site.

The site lies approximately 1 km south of Deep Dale, which forms part of the Wye Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest and the Peak District Dales SAC. It is therefore just within the SSSI impact zone for which quarrying is identified as a potential risk. The existing quarry is surrounded by the Hard Rake hay meadows, and woodland, which are owned and managed for conservation by the Authority. The pond supports a population of the protected Great Crested Newt.

No aggregate has been produced in recent years. The site is situated within the Lower Carboniferous limestones of the Monsal Dale Group. The dip of the geology is approximately south. The beds worked by Mandale Stone Company are those of the crinoidal limestone which is suitable for the decorative stone market and can be used to produce limestone marble.

Proposal

The application proposes a south western extension to the existing Once a Week Quarry to extract limestone. It is proposed to retain the existing quarry excavation, product storage area, sawing shed and associated buildings and land to undertake tipping, restoration works and translocation works. The small pond within the existing quarry is to be retained.

The proposals are for the extension of the existing quarry into an enclosed 1.61ha hay meadow field to the south of the existing quarry face. The mineral extraction area in the field will extend to 0.58ha with a further 0.56ha providing stand-off, etc. Around 0.47ha of the field will remain undisturbed, although hay meadow management is likely to be disrupted. The application proposes the translocation of material from the existing haymeadow habitat from the proposed extension area onto a receptor site, to be created on the existing quarry tip.

Tonnage and Duration

It is proposed to extract 69,000 tonnes of limestone from the site at a rate not exceeding 2,500 tonnes per annum. This is an increase of 1,000 from the 1,500 tonnes per annum previously allowed. It is proposed that extraction will take place over a duration of 27 years.

Working Hours

It is proposed to carry out working at the site between 07:30 – 17:30 Mondays to Fridays and 07:30 – 12:00 Saturdays.

Site Access and Traffic

Vehicular access to the quarry is gained from Flagg Lane which is a single width track. It is proposed to undertake 10 vehicle movements per day.

Method of Working

Limestone is proposed to be extracted in a careful traditional way by hand using plugs and feathers (traditional hand tools) in order not to damage the stone. Individual beds, typically less than 0.5 metres thickness, are lifted along the bedding planes using a hydraulic excavator. Limestone beds in excess of 0.35 metres are turned and split using a hand-held hydraulic hammer, before cutting in the on-site saw shed.

Waste materials and overburden are to be stored in a number of mounds initially to the north and later to the south of the extraction area, typically less than 3 metres in height. These materials are then proposed to be progressively placed back in the worked out void as space.

Generally soils are stripped and stored separately in soil bunds. However, in this instance as the proposed extension area comprises a hay meadow, it is proposed that material from the existing the habitat will be translocated in turves in two phases.

Mineral Extraction Phasing

The proposed operation comprises three phases (phase 1a and b, phase 2 and phase 3) of working which will be worked in a north to south direction. Each of the phases will advance the working face 25-30 metres to the south west. The width of each phase will allow a number of limestone beds at different elevations to be worked at the same time enabling a range of products to be produced. It is proposed that Phase 1 will have duration of 6.6 years, Phase 2, will be 9.8 years and Phase 3 will be 10.9 years.

Phase 1a - Prior to the commencement of mineral extraction, hay meadow turf from the full extent of Phase 1, together with access corridors, will be trans-located to the receptor site at the western end of the quarry. Prior to the placement of the turf, the topsoil mound will be spread out and re-graded. Any large blocks or excess waste will be stored on the quarry floor of the worked out void in the south east corner of the quarry.

Following translocation, weathered limestone at the top of the working face, together with some processed waste, will be placed in the south east corner of the quarry to form Tip T1. The tip located below ground level has sufficient capacity to store waste for the first 4 to 5 years of the development.

Phase 1b - Within 4 to 5 years after the commencement of working in Phase 1, Tip 1 will have reached capacity with additional waste storage required above ground level. Prior to the placement of any waste, new exclusion fencing will be extended around Phases 2 and 3 and the remaining hay meadow turf from these phases will be translocated to the receptor area at the western end of the existing quarry. The total area of translocated turf to the receptor area is 0.66ha.

The new waste tip, T2 will be located on top of the Phase 3 mineral extraction area and constructed to a height of 2.5 metres. Whilst these works are being undertaken, mineral within Phase 1 will continue to be worked.

Phase 2 - Phase 2 will be opened up to allow limestone from various levels/beds to be worked to produce a range of stone products. Waste from the working area will be placed on the quarry floor to form a southern extension area to Tip T1, fully contained below original ground level.

Phase 3 - Waste stored on the surface (Tip T2) will be relocated into the worked out void, fully contained below the original ground level. The full extent of Phase 3 will be opened below the original ground level from the placement area of the working void.

Preliminary Works

Prior to any operational works commencing new exclusion fencing will be erected around the eastern, southern and western boundaries of Phase 1. A small number of existing drystone walls will be removed to facilitate the expansion of the quarry. These will be removed during the implementation of Phase 1. At this point new drystone walls shall be erected around the final phase footprint, to allow continuity of the appearance of the current field structure, but in a slightly altered form. Gateways shall be included into the layout of the new field boundaries to maintain access for grazing. Temporary post and wire fences shall be constructed to divide off each of the subsequent phases of quarrying, with the final footprint enclosed by a permanent drystone wall. The walling and fencing will minimise human access and allow grazing as appropriate

Hay Meadow Translocation

The Applicant proposes to undertake the translocation works in 2 phases. Translocation phase 1 combines the areas which will be translocated as part of the quarrying Phase 1(a and b) and 2. Quarrying of Phase 3 will be conditional on the basis that the translocation phase 1 is successful. Should translocation phase 1 be successful and translocation phase 2 is allowed to proceed, the receptor field will be resurveyed and mapped to ensure that turf is only removed from the donor site, if it can be accommodated at the receptor site. Should there be insufficient space to accommodate translocated turves, then a smaller number of turves will be removed and the extent of the Phase 3 Quarry development will be reduced accordingly.

A detailed scheme for the translocation process has been submitted with the application. The key elements are as follows. Surveys of the receptor site prior to translocation with the aim of identifying the extent of the areas to be translocated. Zones will be identified and marked out and drawings provided to contractors. The donor site would be managed as a hay meadow for the period prior to translocation. The aim of management would be to allow the plants of biodiversity interest to flower and set seed (June-July) and to maintain the sward height at the end of the season (September). The existing hay meadow from phase 1a of operations will be translocated from the proposed extension area onto a receptor site to be created on the existing quarry tip. Prior to translocation, the topsoil storage mounds will be spread over the receptor site at the western end of the existing quarry to produce a smooth level surface in preparation for reception of hay meadow turves. From the initial translocation process monitoring will occur on a regular basis.

The proximity of the woodland to the north of the site has been raised as an issue which could result in a negative impact on any translocated grassland. The woodland in question comprises a row of sycamores *Acer pseudoplatanus* with an approximate 11m overhang across the proposed receptor area. The majority of branches are growing towards the south. Since the row of trees is east to west the amount of shading is reduced. Furthermore the leaf fall each autumn could increase the amount of nutrients on the grassland below and this could reduce the species richness. If this were considered an issue then an additional cut in this area after the majority of leaves have fallen could be undertaken. This would serve to remove any leaves, and therefore the nutrients.

Restoration

It is proposed that the initial restoration of the existing quarry will be restricted to the 0.66ha hay meadow field created from the trans-located turf within the extension area. Limestone faces of varying heights from 5 to 6 metres will be retained around the extension area. The southern embankment to the waste tip in the existing quarry will be retained as a scree slope to increase the biodiversity potential of the site. Fencing will be erected around the top of the quarry faces and scree slope.

It is proposed to restore the quarry floor to limestone grassland which is a Biodiversity Action Plan habitat, and this will be achieved through natural regeneration. Restoration will also include the retention of the existing pond on the site and creation of an additional pond feature within the site. Existing hedgerow and scrub will be retained and supplemented with planting to include tree and hedgerows species suitable for the landscape character area. All structures, utilities and vehicle parking areas will be removed during the final restoration of the site. There will also be opportunity to reinstate and restore dry stone walling on the site.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that, subject to the prior completion of the S106 planning obligation whereby the Applicant, and those with an interest in the site, formally agree to:

- (a) the use of the extraction stone solely for dimensional stone purposes, and**
- (b) No more than 750 tonnes per annum in total (calculated January to December) of stone product shall be removed from the site where delivery addresses are outside the Peak District National Park.**

A) That the application be APPROVED subject to conditions covering the following:

- 1. Development to commence within 3 years from the date of the permission.**
- 2. Duration for the winning and working of mineral to 30 September 2042, the removal of buildings and restoration completed by 30 September 2043.**
- 3. The site and approved details - development to be undertaken in accordance with the application details.**
- 4. Type of Mineral - No mineral other than limestone to be extracted from the site shall be worked.**
- 5. Output Restriction - Limestone shall only be removed from the site for building, walling and decorative stone uses.**
- 6. Mineral Restriction - Limestone shall not be removed from the site as or in the form of aggregate.**
- 7. Destination Restriction - No more than 750 tonnes per annum in total (calculated January to December) of stone product shall be removed from the site where delivery addresses are outside the Peak District National Park boundary.**
- 8. Right to Inspect Delivery Notes.**
- 9. Submission of a statement of sales.**
- 10. Working scheme including phasing – development to be undertaken in accordance with the 3 phases of working identified in the application and revised information**
- 11. Submission and approval of Hay meadow Translocation methodology prior to commencement), including measures of translocation success.**
- 12. Phase 3 quarry operations shall not proceed should Phase 1 & 2 be deemed unsuccessful.**
- 13. 10 year aftercare period for Translocation Phase 1 and 2.**
- 14. Translocation works supervision - Preparation of donor and receptor sites, aftercare and management shall be supervised by a competent and suitably experienced Ecologist.**

15. Aftercare of all translocated turf shall begin immediately after Phase 1 & 2 have been moved to the receptor site, and shall continue for a period of at least 10 years after turves from phase 3 have been placed on the receptor site
16. Fencing – submission of fencing details prior to commencement.
17. Method statement for Great Crested Newts mitigation – to be submitted for approval prior to commencement).
18. Agreement of access route for the internal haul road – access route set out in the details and plan submitted in the application (pre-commencement)
19. Restoration – implication of restoration plan as set out in the restoration management plan.
20. Site Access – Use of approved vehicle access.
21. Access improvements – Submission of a scheme of junction improvements (pre-commencement).
22. Submission and implementation of landscaping scheme for quarry.
23. Biodiversity and habitat creation - submission and approval of details.
24. Pond - Retention of pond and surrounding habitat within the site. - Management and control of Canadian pondweed.
25. Restoration, aftercare and management of quarry – Submission of restoration and aftercare proposals and 5 year aftercare period.
26. Recreational access provision to be agreed.
27. Production of appropriate information and interpretation.
28. Details of drystone walling repair to be agreed.
29. Hours of working – 07:30 - 17:30 daily Monday to Friday, 07:30 - 12:00 Saturday; no working on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays: except for emergency operations
30. Output and resource monitoring- no more than 2,500 tonnes to be removed from the site per annum; total extracted stone leaving the site shall not exceed 69,000 tonnes; provision of annual output records to Authority in January of each year
31. Site and Quarry access and transportation – no more than 10 lorry movements in and 10 out of the site per day carrying stone from the site; via the internal haul road onto Flagg Lane; lorry types.
32. Quarry waste control - any overburden shall be used within the site for progressive restoration.
33. Archaeology - erection of protective fencing to protect remnant industrial features; a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation to be submitted for approval (pre-commencement).
34. Noise - noise levels from site operations shall not exceed 10dB Laeq1h above background noise levels or where the background noise is below 35 Laeq1h shall not exceed a limit of 45 Laeq1h.
35. Blasting - no blasting permitted.
36. Dust, Smoke and Fumes – make available facilities to include water bowser, to control dust problems arising.
37. Lighting - no lighting without Authority's consent.
38. Drainage and water pollution – prevention of slurry, no discharge of foul or contaminated drainage from the site; suitable storage of oils fuel or chemicals; no vehicle maintenance except on impermeable areas.
39. Restrict permitted development rights (buildings, structures, plant machinery) colours of ancillary buildings; parking of plant and vehicles; and removal of ancillary development when no longer required.

B. That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning and the Head of Law jointly to determine the details of the section 106 obligation.

C. That authority is delegated to the Director of Planning to approve the final details of the conditions in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Planning Committee.

Key Issues

- Whether there is a proven need to provide limestone from Once a Week Quarry for use in building works and whether that need can be met in any alternative way;
- If there is a demonstrable need for compatible stone from Once a Week Quarry, whether the environmental impacts arising from the development can be appropriately mitigated;
- Whether any exceptional circumstances exist to allow the development to proceed and whether the proposal represents an overall net benefit to the National Park and is in the public interest.

History

1976 – Temporary 10 year permission granted for extraction of limestone within the old quarry workings. An accompanying legal agreement limited the output to masonry or walling stone and restricted the installation of crushing plant and the production of crushed stone (NP/WED/1075/402).

1988 – Renewal of permission granted for a further period, expiring on 31 December, 2000. The accompanying legal agreement specified a primary end use of walling or masonry stone and allowed a single, small jaw crusher and a limited output of crushed stone to overcome waste stockpiling problems (NP/WED/785/270).

1999 – The Authority purchased the surface ownership of the site and other adjacent land, subject to an exception and reservation of mineral rights by the Chatsworth Settlement.

2000 – Renewal of permission granted for extension of time period for phased mineral extraction of dimensional, building and walling stone, until 31 December 2011. The previous permission to remove crushed stone as aggregate material was revoked. Restoration to agricultural/grazing land is to be completed within 12 months of the cessation of working (NP/DDD/1298/602).

2011 – Replacement shelter building granted and erected (NP/DDD/0111/0009)

2012 – Permission granted to enable 9 months extension of time to complete extraction of the reserves and restoration of the site. (NP/DDD1211/1259)

2014 - Permission was granted to enable 12 months extension of time to complete the extraction of all permitted reserves from the Once a Week quarry. The permission required the removal of stockpiled stone by the 31 August 2014, while restoration would be completed by September 2014 (NP/DDD/0812/0836). A legal agreement was signed which limited the output of the stone for use in building/walling or decorative stone, and limited the use of the limestone for local use only and prohibited the use of limestone outside of the Peak District National Park.

Consultation Responses

DCLG: No comment received

English Heritage: Recommend the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

PDNPA (Archaeology): The Hard Rake landholding was archaeologically surveyed by staff from the PDNPA Archaeology Service in 1999. The report highlighted three features which were related to the areas which are going to be disturbed by the proposed extension. These are: (i) a rubble-filled hollow with an area of lumpy ground around it which may be a lead mining shaft. (ii) The site of a dew pond is shown on the 1922 O.S. map. There is no surface trace of the feature now. (iii) A Parliamentary enclosure: this land was part of the commons of Ashford, part of

Sheldon Moor on the undated (17th century) William Senior map. The commons of Ashford were enclosed by Parliamentary Act of Enclosure in 1767. The commons were then allotted in to large blocks of land which were later sub-divided in to straight sided, regularly shaped fields prior to the 1824 estate map.

If the potential lean mine shaft is going to be affected by this scheme it should be archaeologically recorded by means of rapid measured survey and, possibly investigation by trial trenching. This must be undertaken before any ecological mitigation, such as translocation of turf, commences.

Should the application proceed it is recognised that the wall between the existing active quarry and the 'extension' field will have to be removed to allow extraction. There should be a condition that this boundary be restored when the scheme finishes. Removal of other sections of field wall should be limited to as short a stretch as possible.

Landscaping screening: any landscaping should be in keeping with the existing, open relatively treeless character. Restoration proposals should be sensitive to the landscape character of this area.

PDNPA (Built Environment): State that the Built Environment section of Cultural Heritage Team support this application: *“There is a critical need within the National Park for dimensional Limestone for repairs to existing buildings and for new building. At present Once a Week is the only suitable source of stone of the right size, colour and texture to match that used historically in the area. Without it, the conservation of both existing vernacular buildings and the character of new developments within the limestone areas of the NP would suffer.”*

PDNPA (Landscape): Has no landscape objections to the proposals. A small information point could be useful where the footpath cuts through explaining what the stone is used for. Recommends a final restoration condition asking for full details of treatments etc. closer to final completion of the quarry.

“In respect of the importance of the stone that is excavated. The stone from this quarry is an important resource for historic restoration and landscape purposes. I have specified the stone from this quarry on a number of occasions for landscape projects in particular paving and steps. The unique properties of the stone make it ideally suited for paving having a rough textured surface, reducing slip hazards.”

PDNP (Policy): Advise that the ‘Strategic Stone Study’ has identified this site as being important to the supply of stone for heritage purposes. The need for building stone is accepted in principle by the Core Strategy as a justifiable exception to the overall position of constraint. The principal reason for this exception is to provide building stone of heritage value to support the conservation objectives of the National Park. The extraction of stone for use beyond the National Park boundary may only be permitted as an exception to policy. Refer to paragraph 14.42 of the Core Strategy, which states:

“In exceptional circumstances there may be a need to supply small-scale building and roofing stone to conserve nationally important buildings and structures outside of the national park in line with Annexe 3 of MSP1. In such circumstances where that need cannot be met from elsewhere the Authority will consider whether consent may be granted as an exception to policy MIN3 if the material planning considerations outweigh the policy. This conservation need outside of the Park should not however be the sole reason for seeking to justify new proposals.”

‘As such a key policy matter for this case appears to be an understanding of the scale and proportion of stone that is intended for use outside the National Park. Do the material considerations outweigh the policy principle? Can the structures or buildings outside the National

Park be identified as being of national significance? Or is supply beyond the National Park boundary only included in order to make the scheme more viable? If the latter we need to take great care as this could quite easily become a regular reason to cite as an exception, and as such should not in itself be viewed as a reason to make an exception. Care must be taken to ensure that the principle aim of permitting extraction in the National Park (as an exception to the normal position of constraint) is to further National Park purposes.'

'A clear understanding and view on the level of output that may be permitted for export beyond the National Park is therefore essential, ensuring that the significant majority will be for the National Park itself. It will also be necessary to secure this with a section 106 agreement. This should provide greater potential for monitoring the outcome of extraction should such an exceptional permission be made. Indeed it may be advisable to place the onus of monitoring upon the applicant by requiring them to annually submit a statement of sales.'

'In addition it is clear that this case involves a conflict between the extraction of building stone for heritage purposes and the conservation of a hay meadow with ecological value. This will require a very careful balancing of the particular conservation interests involved with each of these being a priority within our purposes and policies. Close involvement by the respective specialists is essential'.

PDNPA (Property): State that the National Park Authority as landowner objects to the proposal on the following grounds:

- 1. The proposed extension involves destruction of a flower-rich traditionally managed hay meadow which is of national Biodiversity Action Plan quality and which we judge meets the criteria for SSSI designation.*
- 2. The hay meadow is one of a contiguous group of flower-rich meadows and pastures which together are of a size that is so unusual now in the National Park that we sought and secured external funding to purchase the whole group of fields in 1999 when they were threatened by a change in ownership.*
- 3. The JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) do not recommend translocation as an alternative to in-situ conservation of high quality grassland sites because the available research and evidence suggests this is rarely totally successful.'*

'I appreciate that the Authority will make a planning decision based on the merits of the application and will take other aspects of the application into account including the quality and characteristics of the quarried stone.'

PDNPA (Ecology): The Authority's Ecologist objects to this proposal, as it is considered to have a significant ecological impact. Given the nature of the concerns raised, they summarised in some detail below:

'The meadow affected by the proposals is of SSSI quality and is of national importance and should be regarded in this context. Nationally over 97% of this resource has been lost. The urgency to conserve and protect this habitat is recognised by Natural England, they are now adopting a critical standards approach with the presumption being that all sites at least 0.5ha in extent should be selected for notification, singly or in combination. To put this in context, just the area of the grassland habitat required for translocation meets the size threshold for SSSI designation.'

'The importance of this meadow is further elevated as it is part of a wider suite of meadow grasslands that are also of SSSI quality and collectively represents one of the last and largest single units of such grasslands in the Peak District.'

‘Translocation of high quality habitat such as this is damaging and not an acceptable means of mitigation or compensation. This view is supported by the Joint Nature Conservancy Committee. The act of translocation itself disturbs, alters and destroys the integrity of the grassland ecosystem. Consequently translocation is likely to result in a net loss of intact habitat, significantly degraded habitat is the likely outcome of translocation.

‘Permission for this application as it stands would be in conflict with core policy as L2, saved local plan policy LC17 and the NPFF...In addition, as the habitat is of principle importance it therefore comes under the duty of public authorities and Section 40 of the NERC Act...’

History of grasslands at Hard Rake and context

‘Hard Rake grasslands were bought by the National Park Authority in 1999, at the time the future of these valuable grasslands was under threat and the site was bought with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund with the aim being to protect the land for perpetuity, securing environmental and historic values for the future. Hard Rake is particularly valuable because so many of the facets of the heritage of the White Peak are present at the site; haymeadows, flower rich pastures and dewponds.’

Over recent years consideration has been given to having the site designated as SSSI, however, this has not been pursued as the site was considered to be in ‘safe hands’ and not under threat’

Importance of Meadow grassland

‘This site supports lowland meadow habitat. This is a Priority Habitat under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and a key habitat in the Peak District BAP recognised for their importance, local distinctiveness and character and the threat they are under from agricultural improvement and neglect.’

‘Unimproved neutral grassland is now a rare and threatened habitat. It is estimated that by 1984 in lowland England and Wales, semi-natural grassland had declined by 97% over the previous 50 years. Losses continued during the 1980s and 1990s, and have been recorded at 2 -10% per annum in some parts of England, and continue to this day (information taken from the UK BAP for Lowland Meadows).’

‘This loss has continued in the Peak District National Park. 50% of hay meadows of the White Peak have been lost in the past 15 years (up to 2000) and a further 26% have significantly declined in quality. It is now highly unusual on the White Peak plateau of the Peak District to find such an extensive block of flower rich grassland. As such it forms a very important landscape feature, both as a record of past farming and in the provision of such a variety of textures, tones and colours. The size, diversity and fragility of the land and the past record of how the land was managed for hundreds of years, all contribute to the intrinsic appeal of the site. (Hard Rake Management 2000- 2010 PDNPA 1999).’

Individual areas are now small in extent, seldom exceeding 10ha and are highly fragmented (Guidelines for selection of Biological SSSIs, 2014).) The hay meadows collectively at Hard Rake are exceptional in that they are over 10ha in extent.

Translocation

‘The Joint Nature Conservancy Committee have published a document on habitat translocation (A Habitats Translocation Policy for Britain 2003 JNCC) The position of the statutory conservation agencies on important habitats and translocation is clear: “Habitat translocations have been proposed as a means of saving wildlife from areas threatened by development. These translocations have been portrayed by some as a means of reducing the impact of development (mitigation), where as in reality they can only partly make amends for developments (as incomplete compensation)” JNCC

The translocation of habitats is considered by the statutory conservation agencies not to be an acceptable alternative to in situ conservation. “There is limited published information on the success or otherwise of attempts to translocate habitats, but the available information shows that it is not possible to move assemblages of species together without substantial changes taking place in the structure of the habitats and in its species composition thus rendering the translocation unsuccessful with respect to sustaining the original flora and fauna” JNCC

Following the submission of supplementary ecological information submitted by the Applicant, the Authority’s Ecologist, whilst continuing to have significant concerns about the adequacies of translocation, and maintaining an objection, has provided further comment:

‘Should the proposal be granted approval it is strongly recommended that the following conditions are attached’:

Translocation

‘The report ‘Once a week Quarry – Hay meadow translocation ecological response’ Peak ecology Ltd. January 2015 provides a reasonable basis for translocation, monitoring and management, however there are elements within it that need adding and amending and therefore should permission be granted, a revised report will need to be agreed with the Authority. ‘

- *No work shall be undertaken on the application site until a translocation method report has been agreed in advance and to the complete satisfaction of the Authority Ecologist. This should include, but not be exclusive to, preparation of donor and receptor sites, soil strategy, translocation, machinery, timing, management, aftercare, enhancement and monitoring. The work shall then be undertaken as laid out in the report unless otherwise agreed with the Authority.*
- *Translocation shall not be undertaken before October 2015 or before the receptor and donor site is prepared to the satisfaction of the Authority Ecologist.*
- *The translocation, preparation of donor and receptor sites, aftercare and management shall be supervised by a competent and suitably experienced Ecologist.*
- *All of the hay meadow habitat vegetation that is affected by the land take in Phase 1 & 2 of quarry operations shall be translocated for future on-going management as a hay meadow to the location shown on plan 07/23a.*
- *After translocation, a fence line shall be erected along the perimeter of the extraction area of quarry operations (Quarry Phase 1 & 2), so that continued management of the remaining field can take place. There shall be no further incursion into the remainder of the field and no storage of waste. This is to ensure that the remainder of the hay meadow remains intact and can continue to be successfully managed.*
- *Translocation of meadow affected by land take of Phase 3 quarry operations shall be conditional on the success of the translocated turf from Phase 1 & 2, as set out in an agreed translocation methodology report.*
- *Should the translocation of Phase 1 & 2 be deemed unsuccessful (as set out in an agreed translocation methodology report) then Phase 3 translocation shall not proceed.*
- *The measure of success of the translocation shall be agreed with the Authority and included in the translocation method report and be based on, but not exclusively, the following:*
 1. *At least maintain the current botanical species diversity and richness, the baseline of which is to be established during an agreed monitoring plan in summer (July) 2015.*
 2. *Grade A hay meadow criteria as defined in the Farm Environment Plan (FEP) manual*

(Natural England 2010) and survey sheet PDNPA/FEP – grassland identification, feature detail and condition assessment recording card.

3. *To retain notable species such as common spotted orchid, field scabious, ox-eye daisy and common knapweed.*
- *Any enhancement measures of the turves will be undertaken as necessary e.g. spreading of specific seed. Any enhancement measures shall be agreed in advance with the Authority Ecologist.*
 - *Should vegetation from quarry phase 3 be translocated, all of the hay meadow habitat vegetation that is affected by the land take operations shall be translocated for future on-going management as a hay meadow to the location shown on plan 07/23a.*
 - *Immediately after translocation of meadow affected by Phase 3 quarry operations, an agreed fence line shall be installed that allows for the continued management of the remaining field.*
 - *Prior to the start of works the access route for the internal haul road shall be agreed with the Authority. (Currently it is shown across the meadow but this will result in loss of more meadow habitat and there is insufficient capacity to take more turf to the receptor site).*
 - *After care of all translocated turf shall begin immediately after Phase 1 & 2 have been moved to the receptor site, and shall continue for a period of at least 10 years after turves from phase 3 have been placed on the receptor site.*

Compensation

- *The three meadows at Royston Grange and identified on plan 1 shall be enhanced with green hay and shall include primarily seed from later flowering hay meadow flowers, including key species such as ox-eye daisy, common knapweed and great burnet.*
- *The methodology, machinery, timing, donor seed sites and monitoring shall be agreed to the complete satisfaction of the Authority Ecologist. A maximum of two enhancement events will be undertaken, with the first event taking place in summer 2015.*
- *The aim of the enhancement shall be to achieve Grade A hay meadow habitat as defined in the Farm Environment Plan (FEP) manual (Natural England 2010) and survey sheet PDNPA/FEP – grassland identification, feature detail and condition assessment recording card, within 7 years of the final phase of enhancement works at Royston Grange. Species present shall at least include ox eye daisy and common knapweed.'*

Great Crested Newts

'Breeding great crested newts have been found in ponds around the quarry area and the development site supports terrestrial habitats that may be used by great crested newt. A method statement will need to be agreed that has regard for avoiding/minimising disturbance and harm to this species. The method statement will need to be compatible with maintaining the important hay meadow habitats. A suggested condition could include:

- *No work shall be undertaken on the application site until a detailed working method statement has been supplied and agreed in writing with the PDNPA Ecologist stating how potential threats to great crested newts occurring at the site will be avoided. Any mitigation needs to have due regard and be compatible with conserving important hay meadow habitats around the site and proposed translocation operations.'*

Interior habitats of quarry and geological features

'In the longer term it is planned that calcareous grassland will develop in the quarry void by natural colonisation. Aftercare may be needed in the form of some limited weed control and provision for this should be included within a condition. Grazing may also be required and maintenance will require an appropriate infrastructure & access i.e. fencing and a gate to allow controlled management of the site once quarry operations have finished.'

'The plan does not show local topographical variation and it is important that opportunities are sort during the final landscaping process to ensure that there is as much variation as possible in the quarry floor and quarry faces. Rather than a level floor, opportunities should be undertaken to create hummocks and hollows using varied sizes of quarry material. Additionally scree fans at the base of the faces will provide varied habitat as well as stepped faces. Sufficient material from the quarry operations should be put aside specifically for this purpose.'

The site is of significant geological interest and in the past has been used to interpret geology to the public. Opportunities need to be sought for access to the quarry throughout and after its life together with the provision of appropriate information and interpretation. Liaison will be necessary with specialist Geological expertise and the Learning & Discovery Manager at the PDNPA. To maximise interpretation opportunities it will be necessary to ensure that faces are visible and accessible.

It is recommended that a condition is included to cover both the topographical variation and the need for accessible geological faces e.g.

- *Small scale topographical features and quantities and size of materials to create these features shall be agreed within 7 years of the end of quarry operations. Final shaping of faces shall be agreed at regular intervals during the life of the quarry.*

It is proposed that a pond will be created in the south eastern corner of the quarry. In this location the pond will be shaded by the quarry face, it will be better to integrate the pond into the northern half of the extension area. It is highly likely that clay material will need to be brought on site to line the pond. It is recommended that a condition is included along the lines of :

- *The location, design, and materials for lining the pond will be agreed within two years of the end of quarry operations.*

DCC (Highways): No Objection, subject to a condition requiring access improvements. Detailed comments as follows:

The application is to extend the quarry to the south west of the current operations and the proposed annual increase in stone extraction will rise from 1500 tonnes to 2500 tonnes. The applicant states that this increase in tonnage will be accommodated within the 10 HGV vehicle movements per day currently authorised. The submission refers to deterioration of the carriageway at the access junction. The Highway Authority recommends improvements being made prior to any increased quarrying operations. On the basis of the submitted details, raise no objections to the proposals but would recommend the following in the interests of highway safety'.

1) Prior to any works commencing the applicant shall submit a scheme for prior written approval for the junction improvements with the unnamed fronting road. The scheme should include proposed construction and drainage details all as may be agreed with the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented prior to any works commencing on the proposed quarry extension.

DCC (Planning): Comment upon the need for the stone rather than any other merits of the application itself. Summarised as follows:

Note that limestone building stone is difficult to source for jobs in the Peak and especially so where the type and colour of the stone is important. The walling stone produced from Once a

Week quarry was one of only two local suppliers and the main one used for limestone walling stone in the Peak District. Stone from Once a Week is the only one they (local builders) build with and recommend to clients as the other suppliers stone is too porous. The lack of a continuous supply has caused a problem with some sites in the National Park.

Consider that there is a clear need for a continuous supply of a suitable locally sourced natural limestone for local building purposes. Would lend support to the need for Once a Week to continue to supply building stone to meet the demand of the local building market as there is a clear need for it to maintain and conserve the valued characteristics of the built environment. The need locally is for limestone from the quarry to be at the lighter end of the scale – stone that is too dark grey or bluey grey is not preferred.

Derbyshire Dales (EHO): Confirm that they have not received complaints regarding this site and from the description of operations it would appear that the potential noise impact on nearby properties would be limited. Obviously, without a noise survey it is difficult for me to make further observations. Under the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, the recommendations for mineral workings during daytime operations is that where possible, noise from the site during the daytime (07:00 to 19:00hours) should not exceed the background noise level by more than 10dB (A). Given the low level of operation that is suggested at this site, then this would seem to be a reasonable condition. However, without knowing what the existing background noise levels are, cannot give a specific figure.

Natural England: Raises no objection and their relevant comments in respect of the application are: *This application is in close proximity to the Upper Lathkill, The Wye Valley and Lathkill Dale Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's). The Upper Lathkill SSSI forms part of the Peak District Dales SAC. Natural England advises your authority that the proposal, if undertaken in strict accordance with the details submitted, is not likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which Peak District Dales SAC has been classified. Natural England therefore advises that your Authority is not required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment to assess the implications of this proposal on the site's conservation objectives.*

In addition, Natural England is satisfied that the proposed development being carried out in strict accordance with the details of the application, as submitted, will not damage or destroy the interest features for which these SSSI's have been notified. We therefore advise your authority that these SSSI's do not represent a constraint in determining this application. Should the details of this application change, Natural England draws your attention to Section 28(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), requiring your authority to re-consult Natural England.

Ashford in the Water Parish Council: *'Ashford in the Water Parish Council supports this application. Once a Week Quarry is a valuable and unique source of architectural limestone, which is used for maintenance and restoration of existing vernacular buildings, as well as new build. Extension would secure a viable future for this important resource'.*

Maintain their support on reconsultation.

Sheldon Parish Council: *'Sheldon Parish Meeting has some objections to this planning application and asks that you would take into consideration the following comments when making your decision.*

1. *The "Statement of Community Involvement "at 16.0.1 of the Planning Application states that "details of the proposal have been sent toSheldon Parish Meeting. No responses were received." To our knowledge, no approach was made to Sheldon Parish Meeting, so this is incorrect.*

2. *This extension is very large, doubling the size of the present quarry and would be extending fully into a hay meadow. Hay meadows are now very rare and we do have concerns at their loss*

and the difficulty of replacing them. The key issue is to ensure they commit to a full and complete restoration plan of the former hay meadow to the quarried site.

3. The application appears to be to continue quarrying which was at the last application in 2012 said to be coming to an end. We would not like to see this quarry expand indefinitely'

Environment Agency: The Environment Agency confirms that they have no objection to the proposed quarry extension subject to imposition of the planning conditions.

Representations

Friends of the Peak District: In summary, state that they strongly support the application and urge the Authority that the application is approved. Comment that although the extension area has both ecological and archaeological interest, we are satisfied that the mitigation measures proposed are sufficient to conserve the features of interest.

Nine letters of support have been submitted in response to the proposals. These are from employees related to the quarry and Natural Stone Sales Ltd. They are worried that they will not find work if the extension proposals are not approved.

Main policies

Relevant Core Strategy (2011) policies: GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, DS1, L1, L2, L3, MIN 1, MIN3, CC1, CC5, T1, T4.

Relevant Local Plan (2001) 'saved policies' LM1, LM9, LC6, LC9, LC15, LC16, LC17, LC18, LC19, LC22, LT9.

National Planning Policy Framework

As a material consideration in planning decisions, the NPPF recognises the special status of National Parks and the responsibility of National Park Authorities, as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 (as amended). In line with the requirements of primary legislation, paragraph 14 of the NPPF recognises that in applying the general presumption in favour of sustainable development, specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted, for example, policies relating to National Parks.

Paragraph 115 of the NPPF confirms the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty, reflecting primary legislation. The Framework also gives great weight to considerations for the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage.

For minerals, and specifically building stone, the NPPF (paragraph 144) states that when determining planning applications local planning authorities should:

'Give great weight to the benefits of the mineral extraction, including to the economy; as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of land-banks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks; ensure no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality; ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties; provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity to be carried out to high environmental standards; consider how to meet any demand for small-scale extraction of building stone at, or close to, relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; and recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach

to the potentially long duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.’

Assessment

Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (s.38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). The proposal constitutes mineral development which, in terms of the definitions provided in the Development Management Procedure Order (2010), falls under the category of ‘major development’.

The Core Strategy general spatial policies provide overarching principles for spatial planning in the National Park. They relate closely to the delivery of National Park purposes to ensure that the valued characteristics and landscape character of the area are protected. Section E of policy GSP1 states that, in securing national park purposes, major development should not take place within the National Park other than in exceptional circumstances. It goes on to state that major development will only be permitted following rigorous consideration of the criteria in national policy, and that where such a proposal can demonstrate a significant net benefit, every effort to mitigate potential localised harm and compensate for any residual harm would be expected to be secured.

The criteria in national policy as referred to in policy GSP1 are contained in paragraph 116 of the NPPF. That paragraph re-states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in designated areas except in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

- The need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it upon the local economy (NEED);
- The cost of and scope for developing elsewhere outside the designated area or meeting the need for it in some other way (ALTERNATIVES);
- Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities and the extent to which that could be moderated (EFFECTS ON ENVIRONMENT).

In support of CS policy GSP1, policy MIN1(A) states that proposals for new mineral extraction or extensions to existing mineral operations will not be permitted other than in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the criteria set out in National Planning Policy – however, this policy excludes local small-scale building stone proposals which are covered by MIN3.

In assessing whether this application falls within the scope of a ‘small-scale’ building stone proposal, reference is made to other limestone building stone operations in the National Park in terms of the area, duration, intensity of the development and the resultant annual/total output. The proposal seeks an annual output of tonnes 2,500 over a 27 year period. The equivalent figure for Hazelbadge Quarry is 1,500 tonnes per year, although no working has taken place in recent years at this site. There has been an occasional supply of some limestone for building stone uses from some other limestone quarries but on limited basis. In taking such factors into account, it is considered that this proposal sits within the scope of ‘small scale’ and therefore falls to be considered against policy MIN3 rather than MIN 1 (A). Nevertheless, because the proposal is by definition, ‘major development’ it needs to be assessed against the exceptional circumstances and public interest tests in GSP1 and paragraph 116 of the NPPF.

The requirements of policy MIN3 overlap to a large extent with the overarching policies of GSP1 and the exceptional circumstances test set out in the NPPF for major developments in National

Parks. The policy states that proposals will only be permitted for small-scale working of building and roofing stone where:

- (i) they meet a demonstrable need within the National Park, which cannot be satisfied from existing permissions inside or outside the National Park;
- (ii) they will be confined to local use only on buildings and structures within the National Park; and
- (iii) the individual and cumulative impacts of working on the environment, amenity and communities can be appropriately mitigated.

In respect of point (i), the policy states that any proposal should be supported by demonstrable evidence which proves that alternative sources of supply are not and cannot be made available.

In considering the above policies, the three key areas of Need, Alternatives and Effect on the Environment are now considered in more detail, in conjunction with an assessment as to whether exceptional circumstances exist to permit the development. Additionally, conformity with other relevant detailed Development Plan policies is included in the assessment, alongside national policies set out in the NPPF. This is undertaken with consideration given to the overriding requirement in policy GSP1 that major development will only be permitted following rigorous consideration of the criteria in national policy.

NEED FOR THE DEVELOPMENT

In their submission the applicant has presented a case of need to address this particular requirement.

Geology

The Applicant considers that the geology of Once a Week Quarry is unique. Once a Week Quarry works a Carboniferous Limestone deposit – specifically the Eyam Limestone formation (Knoll Reef). This deposit is extremely limited in geographical extent. The British geological Survey website confirms that the deposit is limited only to the Peak District and describes it as a thinly bedded, dark grey, cherty, bio-clastic limestone with fossiliferous beds...which is overlain by massive pale reef limestone. The Applicant has submitted supporting geological evidence which demonstrates that the deposit is limited to the Peak District within the vicinity of Monyash.

The submission confirms that there are no other quarries either within the Park that can produce the same products. Their submission refers to the Strategic Stone Study undertaken by English Heritage and BGS which identifies all quarries that are producing or have produced building stone throughout the country. The study confirms that Once a Week quarry is the only operational quarry working the Eyam Limestone.

Building Tradition & Restoration

The ES sets out that there is a need to use stone which will restore and conserve listed and historic buildings of historic and architectural importance, which have experienced a deterioration of stonework and masonry features on account of weathering over time. The use of locally-derived stone is an important aspect of the architectural quality and character of many of the buildings and structures in the Park.

The Applicant has confirmed that the stone will be used for the repair of old buildings since its unique properties and colour are typical of the buildings found within the White Peak. This statement is also supported by the Built Environment Team and Landscape Architect within the Peak District National Park Authority, who have confirmed that there is a critical need within the National Park for dimensional limestone for repairs to existing buildings and for new building.

This is supported by policy within the Peak District National Park's Design Guide 4 – Materials states:

'New buildings should ideally be constructed from the same palette of materials used traditionally in the area. This means for the most part, natural stone for walling and slate or tile for roofs...The two predominant types of building stone in the peak District are Millstone Grit (a buff or pink, large-grained sandstone) and Carboniferous Limestone (a grey, hard fossil rich stone).'

Notwithstanding the tests for major developments in National Parks, paragraph 144 of the NPPF requires local planning authorities to consider how to meet demand for small-scale extraction of building stone at, or close to, relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets and expects such authorities to recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building [and roofing] stone quarries, and the need to adopt a flexible approach to the potentially long duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites. The application for Once a Week falls generally within this description and therefore, the Authority is required to pay particular attention to the small-scale nature of the development proposal in making its determination.

In respect of the second strand of CS policy MIN 3, which requires that the stone be confined to local use only on buildings and structures within the National Park, the Applicant has requested that an exception is made. They consider that the volumes that would go outside the Park are insignificant, typically less than 750 tonnes per annum, and approximately 93% of such material would be destined for locations within 5km of the Park boundary. The Applicant considers that *'the sale of very small quantities of higher value products into the wider market are critical to the continued viability of the business'*. *'Closure of the site would be detrimental to Park policies regarding Conservation and maintenance of the built environment and climate change and would lead to the loss of traditional stone cutting skills.'*

They have requested that small volumes of material be allowed outside the National Park. This will be used in the wider locality and decorative stone to be used further afield, whilst ensuring that at least 70% of material will be sold within the National Park.

Given that there is a real need for the stone within the Park, and that the applicant has made a commercial case, a material consideration is considered to exist. Planning conditions are proposed which will ensure that no more than 750 tonnes per annum of stone product shall be removed from the site where delivery addresses are outside the Peak District National Park boundary (this is typically around 30% of annual output). The Authority will also have the right to inspect delivery notes. In addition, a condition restriction to ensure none of the stone is extracted for primary aggregate purposes also provides assurance and there is consistency with policy MIN1.

In addition to these conditions, a unilateral Section 106 obligation will be sought from the Applicant to secure the restriction the use of the stone extracted solely for dimensional stone purposes, up to a maximum of 750 tonnes per annum of the stone is used annually outside the Park. Taking into account the aforementioned material consideration, this will ensure compliance with policy MIN3 (C) and provide a "belt and braces" approach to securing the successful implementation of the policy.

ALTERNATIVES

The second criteria to be assessed is whether other alternative sites exist that could provide such stone, or whether the need could be met in some other way, including an appraisal of the cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere. The Applicant has provided further information in the assessment of whether there are alternative sites outside of the Park that could provide such stone. The 2008 Derbyshire County Council list of stone quarries identifies 23 quarries located in the local area and provides details of the colour, texture and type and geological classification of

products from these quarries. It states that all of the quarries on this list produce sandstone and are typically a buff colour which is not in keeping with traditional buildings in much of the Park, particularly the High Peak. Quarries outside of the Park are Millstone Grit not Carboniferous Limestone.

The 2014 Quarries Directory identifies limestone or dimensional stone quarries operating in Derbyshire and they have been discounted because they either do not produce dimension stone or the colour is unsuitable. The assessment confirms that the particular characteristics of limestone that has traditionally been used in buildings within the Park is that is naturally bedded and square ended and capable of being laid either as 'coursed' or 'uncoursed' (random blocks). This is the result of the geology of the deposit where heights between various beds of stone are naturally of a depth that allows them to be used in building applications without the need for cutting. As a result this stone produces a very distinctive style of building and Once a Week quarry is currently the only source of this stone. The stone has been used in renovation and the extension of existing buildings within the National Park.

The ES also considers alternatives to the scheme as required by the EIA Regulations 2011. The ES confirms that the site is already an established quarry within the local environment and is well screened and an established barely noticeable feature in the local environment. The site benefits from a good relationship with the local community and rarely receives complaints regarding its activities. There are established markets predominantly within the National Park boundary and to a very limited degree beyond for certain products.

Geological Constraints

The supporting information submitted with the application confirms that in the immediate vicinity of the quarry the geological deposits do not extend much beyond the eastern boundary of the proposed extension area. Planning permission for an area to the north west of the existing quarry was granted previously, but has never been worked because the stone quality deteriorates in that direction. Land to the east and south east drops away dramatically. The rock has been naturally eroded over time with the result that the surface beds no longer exist. Cross sections which accompanied the application show the stone decreasing in thickness whilst the clay overburden increases. This area is also much more exposed and therefore difficult to screen. The geological beds are visible in the quarry face and have been proven by core drilling. It is the only direction in which the quarry can be extended. Cross sections confirm that the deposit also runs out towards the west leaving a southern extension as the only viable option.

In taking all the above factors into account, it is considered that there are exceptional circumstances and material considerations to permit the proposal in terms of need and alternatives, subject to being able to adequately control any adverse effects on the environment. In terms of policy MIN3, the small-scale nature of the proposal does meet a demonstrable need within the National Park, which cannot be satisfied from existing permissions inside or outside the National Park. Additionally, the use of the stone would be mostly confined to local use only on buildings and structures within the National Park, therefore the proposal is in line with this policy, subject to the individual and cumulative impacts of working on the environment, amenity and communities being appropriately mitigated.

EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPE AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Having assessed need and alternatives, the third strand of the NPPF and GSP1 major development test is an assessment of any detrimental effects on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which those effects could be moderated. This ties in with the assessment of the development against policy MIN3 (part iii) which states that the Authority will only permit small scale working of building and roofing stone where the individual and cumulative impacts of working on the environment, amenity and community can be

appropriately mitigated. There are several areas to be considered in terms of environmental impact, which are set out below.

Biodiversity and Ecology

Hay Meadow

The proposed quarry extension would result in the loss of part of a hay meadow which is currently used for grazing. This type of land is considered to be valuable habitat and is a UK and Peak District National Park BAP species. The hay meadow and pastures in the vicinity of the proposed development site are known to support breeding skylarks. Mitigation would be required in the form of similar replacement habitat. It is proposed to translocate the area of hay meadow that would be lost to a prepared area within the existing quarry.

The ES has demonstrated that potentially there may be significant impact arising from the development on biodiversity and ecology, specifically the loss of hay meadow habitat. There has been objection made by the Authority's Ecologist and Property Officer. In summary, they consider that the proposed extension involves the destruction of a flower-rich traditionally managed hay meadow which is of national Biodiversity Action Plan quality and which they judge meets the criteria for SSSI designation. The translocation process is viewed as damaging and not an acceptable means of mitigation or compensation. The proposals are not considered to be in accordance with planning policy.

In respect of assessing the proposals against planning policy, Core Strategy policy GSP1 indicates that every effort to mitigate potential localised harm and compensate for any residual harm to the areas valued characteristics would be expected to be secured. Core Strategy policy L2 seeks to conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity or geo-diversity importance and, where appropriate, their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances, development will not be permitted where it is likely to have an adverse impact on sites of biodiversity or geo-diversity importance. Similarly, saved policy LM1 of the Local Plan states that mineral development will not be permitted unless adverse impacts on the valued characteristics and amenity of the area can be reduced to the minimum practicable level, or eliminated, and the development is acceptable given the need to conserve and enhance the National Park.

Local Plan policy LC17 seeks to protect sites, features or species of wildlife importance and policy LC19 requires scientific assessment of the nature conservation importance of sites not subject to statutory designation based on specified criteria including diversity, richness, rarity and irreplaceability. MIN3 (part iii) only permits small scale working of building and roofing stone where the individual and cumulative impacts of working on the environment, amenity and community can be appropriately mitigated.

At the national level, the NPPF says that the conservation of wildlife is an important consideration and should be given great weight in National Parks. It states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by (inter alia) minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. Accepting that exceptional circumstances has been demonstrated, consideration therefore needs to be given as to whether the development is **likely** to have an **adverse impact** on the hay meadow and that every effort is taken to conserve, mitigate and enhance against harm.

Whilst avoidance of loss of the hay meadow would be preferred, this option has been discounted by the Applicant. The alternatives to this scheme have been fully considered and discounted and exceptional circumstances demonstrated.

The hay meadow habitat would be translocated in an attempt to retain and preserve the habitat and ensure that there is no net loss. Whilst it is acknowledged that the process is uncertain,

there has been considerable information submitted to ensure that the process is undertaken to ensure that the translocation has a good chance of success and to ensure that there will be safeguards in place.

The soils report supporting the planning application confirms that there is soil compatibility between the receptor and the donor area. It appears that the impact can be controlled and/or reduced to a large degree through the implementation of mitigation. A further detailed method statement can be submitted as part of a suite of pre-commencement conditions, to be approved by the Authority prior to any development taking place on the site. The Authority can ensure that the translocation works are undertaken by a specialist contractor authorised by the Authority. Aftercare of the hay meadow will begin immediately after translocation Phase 1 and 2 have been removed to the receptor site and shall continue for a period of 10 years after turf translocation has been completed.

Whilst the translocation process may not be ideal, with on-site conservation always being the preferred option, it is an attempt to retain and preserve the value of the habitat. This must be weighed against the fact that the proposal provides a benefit to the Park in that it will meet a much needed local demand for stone.

As outlined within NPPF, flexibility should be accorded to projects where there is a local need for the stone and this is very much a small scale local operation. The information provided demonstrates that the Applicant is trying to mitigate the impact to the habitat through translocation and also provide enhancement to the Park, although this is over a longer period. It should be recognised that the area of hay meadow affected represents only a small proportion of the hay meadows owned by the Authority. The Applicant has provided information which demonstrates that they have considered all alternatives to the scheme.

The impact can be controlled and/or reduced to a large degree through the implementation of a number of mitigation measures. Should the first phase of translocation prove unsuccessful, then quarrying shall not continue to the 3rd phase. A Method Statement has been submitted as part of the application details. This has been assessed by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust who has made no adverse comment. Comments raised by the Authority's Ecologist in relation to the translocation have been addressed, where possible, through post application submission discussions with the Applicant.

Compensation - Enhancement of Existing Hay meadow

The Authority's Ecologist has requested that there is ecological compensation should Members be minded to approve the application. The Applicant has submitted a signed unilateral undertaking which provides for a financial contribution of £3,200 plus VAT to enable the enhancement of three existing meadows which are owned and managed by the Authority at Royston Grange. It should be noted that this compensation has been provided by the Applicant directly to overcome the objections made by the Authorities Ecologist. The proposal has been assessed on its planning merits, without consideration of this contribution.

Breeding Birds

The loss of the hay meadow will mean the loss of the habitat for species such as curlew and skylark (both known from the site). The provision of hay meadow creation in the plans for the quarry will replace habitat to be lost. This will include hay meadow translocation. The ES confirms that the replacement grassland habitat as part of the mitigation proposals will ensure breeding habitat is maintained for this species.

Bats

The quarry faces have some potential for bat roosts (those in the south west which have not been worked for some time) will not be affected by the extension works. Therefore, if any bat roosts are present in the quarry faces it is unlikely they will be affected by the proposed extension given that the proposed works represent similar activities that have been carried out on

site for many years. In addition, there will be little loss of foraging and commuting habitat. Therefore, no further mitigation has been advised.

Reptiles

The ES confirmed that there was potential for hibernation sites locally, particularly within the woodland and in the waste rock and soil mounds around the western section of the site. There were no records of reptiles in the area.

Great Crested Newts

The ES confirms the presence of great crested newts within proximity to the works and that an EPS mitigation licence will be required across the site. It confirms that no breeding ponds will be directly affected by the proposed works and it is likely that only a small amount of terrestrial habitat will be lost as part of the works. A method statement will be prepared as part of the licensing agreement with Natural England and this will be conditioned.

Amphibians

The ES confirms that the pond on site and others found locally offer potential for amphibians such as newts and toads to be present. The retention of this pond will be required through planning condition.

The Environmental information submitted demonstrates that whilst there will be significant impacts arising from the development on biodiversity and ecology, those impacts can be controlled and reduced through the implementation of a number of mitigation measures. Whilst the proposed impact upon the hay meadow has attracted objection from the Authority's Ecologist and Property Manager, there has been no objection from Natural England, and the issues raised by the Authority's Ecologist have been addressed by the Applicant as far as possible.

CS policy GSP2 states that opportunities should be taken to enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park. The policy goes on to state that proposals intended to enhance the National Park will need to demonstrate that they offer significant overall benefit to natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area. The restoration of the quarry to calcareous grassland is a targeted measure included within the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan habitat and will deliver some biodiversity gain, albeit it will be when the quarry ceases in ecological works already proposed, but with the intention of delivering some biodiversity 'gain' over and above those measures which are necessary solely to address the impacts of the development. The inclusion of this plan would also be in line with the NPPF policy (paragraph 118). This requires that local planning authorities, in determining applications, should seek to encourage opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments, and would therefore also address the advisory comment made by Natural England about biodiversity enhancement.

It is considered that the proposal is in accordance with policies MIN3, L2, LM1, LC17 and LC19 and is consistent with the policy direction at national level concerning wildlife conservation.

Blasting and vibration

Since the stone proposed to be extracted from the quarry is destined primarily for use in a heritage and local vernacular projects, it needs to be carefully extracted from the quarry face. No blasting is proposed. The proposed method of working is for stone to be carefully extracted by removing blocks which are defined by joints and bedding planes. Where such blocks are too large to handle, it may be necessary to split them using a plug and feather technique but this will not compromise the structural integrity of the stone.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal will not give rise to any vibration effects resulting from blasting operations and so will be in conformity with the environmental protection policies contained in LM1, MIN3 and the relevant paragraph in the NPPF which seeks to ensure that any unavoidable blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source.

Landscape and Visual Impact

The NPPF (paragraph 115) gives the National Park the highest status of landscape protection. LDF Policy L1 stipulates development must conserve and enhance values character identified in the LSAP. Policy L2 seeks to conserve and enhance sites biodiversity and geo-diversity importance. Policy MIN1 indicates that restoration schemes should focus on nature conservation afteruses and should include a combination of wildlife and landscape enhancement, recreation and recognition of cultural heritage and industrial archaeological features.

The quarry is set within an agricultural landscape with an area of woodland to the north and north east. Drystone walling field boundaries define the site perimeter and the immediate surrounding area.

The effects of the development on landscape features, landscape character, views from roads, properties and monuments has been assessed as part of the ES in a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) and a supplementary LVIA report (July 2012). The LVIA acknowledges that the development proposals are of a reasonably large scale and that the operational phases, especially the initial phasing and lateral progression will be more visually intrusive. The quarrying process, removal of existing vegetation, vehicle movements and changes in topography brought about by soil storage all have the potential to cause adverse impact.

The Landscape and Visual Assessment confirms that the significance of the effect of the proposed quarry upon the site and site landscape features is assessed as negligible. A proportion of quarry waste will need to be placed above ground level within the quarry extension, covering an area of approximately 0.15ha. The storage area will be built to an elevation of 317 m AOD, varying in height from 1.5 to 2.5 m. The outer faces will be dressed with soils in order to establish grass cover during the operational life of the site. However the majority of the quarry waste materials will be stored below ground level within the quarry for future restoration.

The small scale of the quarry development, the nature of activities involved and the location of the site will all minimise significance of effect upon the broader landscape character area to negligible. The proposed development would have no effect upon any designated landscapes, conservation areas, listed buildings or local scheduled monuments.

Taking the assessment into consideration overall the landscaping impact is considered to be small and the proposed development can be controlled to minimize the effects on the characteristics and amenity of the area, in terms of landscape impact. The proposal has not attracted objection from the Authority's Landscape Officer. The proposal is in accord with policies L1, MIN1, LM1 and the relevant landscape and restoration policies of the NPPF.

Countryside Access and Recreation Impact Assessment

The LDF Core Strategy (chapter 10) supports recreation and sustainable access and development should not prejudice the informal quiet enjoyment of the National Park (Policy RT1). There is an informal path which runs across the paddock which lies to the north of the quarry. It is considered that this can be re-routed along the rear boundary of the paddock. The details can be agreed by planning condition.

The 'Monyash Round' is a circular walk from Monyash on the public footpaths which run through fields to the east and west of the site. The footpath to the west is 200 metres away from the site at its closest point whilst the footpath to the east is 325m away. The existing quarry storage area is visible from the western footpath but local topography prevents views from the east. There will be views of the surface operations such as the construction of tip T2. However, these operations will be short in duration and similar to agricultural operations. They have been assessed by the Applicant as of moderate impact.

The Authority's Landscape Officer has no objections to the scheme and is satisfied that the impacts have been assessed and are not significant. The proposal is considered to be in accord with policy RT1, MIN 3 and LM1.

Traffic

No more than 10 lorry movements are proposed to take place per day at the site, with the average figure being considerably less. The lorries will travel along the Flagg Road which is a readily accessible link to the B5055, leading to the A515 or the A6. There have been no complaints over lorry movements associated with the most recent past mineral working at the site. As such the lorry traffic associated with the proposed development would have limited impacts on the environment and amenity of the area.

The Highway Authority has raised no objections to the proposed development but, due to the condition of the vehicular access and the proposed duration of the development, has recommended improvements be made to the vehicular access prior to any quarrying operations.

Core Strategy policy T1 seeks to conserve and enhance the National Park's valued characteristics in a number of ways, including minimising impacts of traffic within environmentally sensitive locations. Policy T4 specifically relates to freight traffic, stating that facilities should be related to the needs to the National Park-based businesses and should be located to avoid harm to the valued characteristics of the National Park or compromise to the routes which are subject to weight restriction orders.

In assessing the proposals put forward, it is considered that the development proposal does not conflict with Development Plan policies T1 and T4. Local Plan policy LT9 states that, depending on the nature of the business, planning permission may be given to business subject to an agreement about the size of vehicles to be used. The development proposal accords with this policy as there is already consensus on the size of vehicles to be used to transport stone from the site. It is considered that the access, vehicular access improvements, lorry types and numbers can be covered by conditions. Consequently the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policies MIN3 T1, T4 and LT9

Noise

The Environmental Statement confirms that no blasting is undertaken at the quarry. It is worked by traditional methods involving minimal mobile plant and machinery. Sawing is undertaken in the on-site saw shed. There have been no historic problems with neighbours regarding noise.

The nearest residential properties to the site are Nursery Fields Farm, 620 metres to the southwest of the application site, Barker Fields Farm, 885 metres to the southeast and Red House, 1120m to the south east, and Johnson Lane Farm, 1160 metres to the east north east.

The very low output of the site combined with the proposed phasing of working means that the occasions when mobile plant will be operating on the surface will be minimal. Furthermore the proposed hay meadow translocation will be undertaken by specialist turf lifting equipment which more resembles agricultural machinery than heavy mobile quarry plant.

The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the proposals and has confirmed that there is no objection to the proposals and that noise can be dealt with by planning condition. This has previously been the case with previous permissions related to the site.

With regard to the third strand of policy MIN3 relating to the control of environmental effects, and Local Plan saved policy LM1 (requiring consideration of the risk and impact of potential pollution affecting the use of land, including noise, dust, vibration and fumes), it is considered that noise levels from the proposed development will not be above acceptable limits and measures can be imposed through conditions to allow control over noise impacts arising from the development. Such conditions can cover noise emission levels, restriction of reversing beepers and hours of

operation. In view of these safeguards the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy MIN3 and LM1. The NPPF Technical Guidance requires that MPAs should ensure that unavoidable noise emissions are controlled, mitigated or removed at source, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties. Again, given the low level nature of the activities proposed and the imposition of appropriate conditions on the grant of permission, the proposal is considered acceptable in this respect.

It is considered that the noise limit of 45 dB LAeq (1hr) free field, previously set out in the mineral permissions at the site are added as a condition to the new permission. Consequently the proposal is considered to be in accord with policy MIN 3 and LM1.

Dust

The NPPF (paragraph 143) and Local Plan Policy LM1 seek to ensure that operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts from dust on the natural and historic environment or human health.

The method of working at the quarry employs traditional techniques of splitting the rock rather than the use of blasting. No crushing or screening takes place and there is the occasional use of mobile plant. There are therefore far fewer dust sources than in larger quarrying operations and very little to generate fine dust particles.

The effects of dust can be appropriately mitigated and therefore the development is in accordance with policy LM1.

Hydrology

The NPPF (para.103) and LDF Policy CC5 both require that flood risk is not increased elsewhere by development proposals. The potential impacts of the development on the water environment have been assessed as part of the application.

The potential impacts of the development on the water environment have been assessed as part of the application. With the exception of the pond there are no surface water features in the existing quarry, the proposed extension area or the immediate vicinity of the site. Surface water falling into the quarry currently soaks away naturally through the existing quarry floor or the small pond located within the existing quarry void. Surface water falling in proposed quarry extension will be managed in the same way. All the excavations proposed within the excavation area are above the natural water table level. No de-watering of the proposed quarry excavations is therefore required.

The Environment Agency has raised no objection to the proposed quarry extension subject to imposition of certain planning conditions. The proposal is therefore considered to be in conformity with the Core Strategy policies CC1, CC5 and MIN3. Similarly, it is in line with Local Plan policy LM1 where in respect to minerals development 'Particular attention will be paid to the following and planning conditions will be imposed as appropriate where: (vii) harm to surface and groundwater resources. The hydrological and hydrogeological aspects of the development proposal will not result in harm and therefore fit with policies MIN3, CC5 and LM1.

Archaeology

The NPPF identifies cultural heritage assets including those most at risk as an irreplaceable resource and that their conservation in a manner appropriate to their significance should be given great weight in National Parks. The LDF paragraph 9.40 promotes consideration of qualities and local distinctiveness of the historic environment and how these contribute to the spatial vision, and seeks to conserve heritage assets most at risk.

The ES confirms that there are no Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas or Listed Buildings within the site or in the immediate vicinity of the site. The closest Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are outside the Zone of Theoretical Visibility for the site, in excess of 1.5km away. The

ES confirms that there is potentially an old mine shaft in the extension area. This feature has been excluded from the proposed extraction area and will therefore be preserved in situ.

A lead mining feature which constitutes an area of lumpy ground located at the southern boundary of the extension area has been excluded from the operations and a condition will ensure that this feature is retained. Where practicable drystone walls will be reinstated following restoration or alternatively the stone will be used to reinforce existing boundaries and this will be conditioned accordingly.

Core Strategy policy L3 seeks to ensure that development conserves and, where appropriate, enhances or reveals the significance of archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic assets and their settings, including statutory designations. Development will not be permitted, other than in exceptional circumstances, where it is likely to cause harm to the significance of any such asset. Policy L1 relates to landscape character, and includes the history and archaeology of the area and the historic buildings and registered parks and gardens as key aspects of the overall landscape character of an area. The policy states that development must conserve and enhance valued landscape character.

The Authority's Archaeologist is satisfied with the proposals subject to the imposition of a series of conditions, the main one of which would be the requirement to submit (for prior approval) a programme of archaeological work including a Written Scheme of Investigation. In summary, the proposals do not conflict with the specific policies of the Development Plan.

Cumulative effects

The NPPF (para 143) requires account to be taken of the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual mineral sites and/or a number of sites in the locality. CS policy MI3 and Local Plan LM1 also require an assessment of the cumulative impacts of operations. Examination of the public register establishes that there were no development proposals with planning permission in the wider which would lead to the proposed development having an unacceptable cumulative impact.

Employment and Local Economy

Policy is clear that where there are conflicting desired outcomes in achieving national park purposes priority must be given to the conservation of the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Park over socio-economic benefits. The Core Strategy (paragraph 4.28) states "the challenge is to manage down the adverse environmental impacts of the (minerals) industry respecting the fact that it provides jobs and building materials that are valuable locally and nationally". The 2011 National Parks Census identifies 185 residents employed in Mining and Quarrying (1% of all employment) in the Park District National Park, the second highest number and second highest percentage of residents employed in this sector out of the 13 England & Wales National Parks.

Once a Week Quarry makes a contribution to the local economy. The quarry provides employment for 5 people from the local area who spend their income locally. A stone cutting business located in Rowsley is also supported by the quarry and this employs a further 7 people. The companies also subcontract 3 fitters and regularly use a further 5 contracting companies. From letters of support received in respect of the proposed extension most employees live in local villages and Derbyshire towns. The ES confirms that the site provides skilled, well paid employment to local people who spend their income in the towns and villages in the area. These factors should be taken into account in determining this application, but do not, in themselves, justify an approval.

The site makes a significant contribution to the supply of locally sourced building stone within the Park. These materials are essential to the development and maintenance of the built environment. Due to the costs of transportation, it is preferable to extract materials from a quarry local to the site of works. In addition to reducing costs of manufacture, this proximity benefits the

local economy by improving the availability, quality and visual appropriateness of the materials being used, as well as reducing the type of materials used in the local housing and other construction projects.

The Applicant is proposing to translocate the hay meadow affected by the extension proposals. This will be undertaken in two stages. They have confirmed that they will employ the services of specialist ecologists to oversee and project manage the translocation and these details can be conditioned accordingly. In addition, a ten year aftercare will commence once each stage of the translocation process has been complete. Upon the cessation of mineral extraction the quarry floor will be allowed to naturally regenerate to limestone grassland. There will be variation in levels of the floor created and a pond and new habitat will be created.

Quarry Restoration, Aftercare and Enhancement

The quarry restoration proposals are considered acceptable having regard to Policy MIN1 of the Core Strategy which sets out criteria for the restoration and after-use of minerals development. Restoration of all minerals and waste development is expected to contribute to the general spatial outcomes of the plan. These outcomes are expected to focus on amenity (nature conservation) after uses rather than agriculture or forestry.

Conditions are proposed which require an ecological management plan and aftercare programme to secure the proposed restoration and its management for a period of five years. A further condition requires the applicant to submit an aftercare management plan every year during the aftercare period.

The site is considered to be of significant geological interest and in the past has been used to interpret geology to the public. Opportunities will be sought for access to the quarry as the quarrying, restoration and aftercare progresses for the provision of information and interpretation features. In addition, topographical quarry variation and relocation of the proposed pond will be sought in the approved restoration proposals. These will be secured through the imposition of planning conditions.

The proposal is considered to be in accord with policies GSP2, MIN1, MIN3 and LM1.

Translocated Hay Meadow Aftercare

Aftercare of the hay meadow will begin immediately after areas Phase 1 and 2 have been moved to the receptor site, and shall continue for a period of at least 10 years after turves from phase 3 have been placed on the receptor site.

Section 106 considerations

If Members wish to approve the application, there is a number of additional material planning considerations which are required to be secured by a section 106 obligation as required by policy MIN3 (C). The legal agreement would be required to cover the following:

- Restriction on the primary use of the stone solely for dimensional stone purposes.
- Restricting the amount of stone to no more than 750 tonnes per annum of stone product where delivery addresses are outside the National Park.

Government guidance is a material consideration in determining planning applications. Planning obligations can mitigate the impact of unacceptable development to make it acceptable in planning terms. Obligations should meet the tests that they are necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development, and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. These tests are set out as statutory tests in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 and as policy tests in the National Planning Policy Framework (superseding Circular 05/2005). The 2010 regulations state:

“A planning obligation may only constitute a reason for granting planning permission for the development if the obligation is—

- (a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;*
- (b) directly related to the development; and*
- (c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development”.*

The unilateral S106 obligation would provide the Authority with an assurance that any stone won from the quarry is used for specific purposes. With the material consideration of allowing up to 750 tonnes per annum of the stone to be used outside the Park, this agreement would ensure compatibility with the requirement to ensure that the majority of the stone will be restricted to local use only on buildings and structures within the National Park, as specified in CS policy MIN3. This restriction is therefore necessary to make the development acceptable in policy terms, directly related to the development, fairly and reasonable in all respects. It is therefore considered consistent with the guidance on section 106 obligations and conditions.

Conclusion

The proposal is considered to be major development. The policy direction in the Core Strategy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that major development should not take place within National Parks other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that it is in the public interest. In this case, exceptional circumstances have been demonstrated to support the development within the National Park, and it is clear that the proposal would provide benefits and would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development objectives, predominantly in the National Park, through provision of heritage conservation, creating a high quality built environment, use of natural resources prudently and helping to improve the biodiversity.

The NPPF also requires local planning authorities to give great weight to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy. Specific reference is made to building stone and the need to consider how to meet any demand for small-scale extraction of building stone at, or close to, relic quarries needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites. Similarly the NPPF requires Mineral Planning Authorities to recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the potentially long duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.

The proposed working is considered to be small in scale. It is considered to be in the national and local interest to undertake the proposed development to maintain the historic and heritage environment of the Peak District National Park.

In assessing the primary end use of the stone to be extracted, it is considered that the proposal would have a substantial positive impact in enabling the restoration and new build work on properties and structures within the National Park. The proposal therefore complies with the end use requirement specified in Core Strategy policy MIN3.

Core Strategy policies seek to conserve and enhance any sites, features or species of biodiversity or geo-diversity importance and, where appropriate, their setting. Other than in exceptional circumstances, development will not be permitted where it is considered to have an adverse impact on sites of biodiversity or geodiversity importance.

Consideration has been given as to whether the development is **likely** to have an **adverse impact** on the hay meadow. The ES has confirmed that potentially there may be significant impact arising from the development on biodiversity and ecology, specifically the loss of hay meadow habitat. However in mitigation, the Applicant is proposing to translocate part of the hay meadow which will be affected.

The detailed information submitted regarding the proposed translocation provides reassurance that that an adverse impact is unlikely. Overall, having regard to the ES and the further information submitted through consultation, it is considered that the proposed operations, in conjunction with the recommended conditions would not likely create an adverse impact sufficient to justify refusal of this application.

The proposed mitigation measures are considered to be sufficient to control those impacts and with provision for 10 years aftercare for the translocated hay meadow and further habitat establishment within the quarry following cessation of mining to calcareous grassland which will enhance the valued characteristics of the National Park.

Subject to the recommended conditions, it is considered that the proposed development would not unacceptably (individually or cumulatively) impact upon the landscape and environment and amenity in terms of landscape character, visual appearance, noise, dust, blasting, lighting, nor on the water environment, archaeology, cultural heritage, ecology, recreation, residential amenity, highways and traffic. The potential loss of part of this block of hay meadow is unfortunate, but this needs to be balanced against the wider benefits of providing a local supply of natural stone and it may be mitigated by translocation, if this is successful.

Overall, it is considered that there are exceptional circumstances specifically the ability to obtain locally produced specialised limestone from this site, sufficient to overcome those policy objections. It is also considered on balance that the proposals are in both the public interest and that of the wider interests of the National Park because of the supply of specialised stone will be made available, thereby helping to maintain the conservation of the built heritage of the National Park. The proposal is not considered to be contrary to the fundamental aims of the Authority to conserve and enhance the National Park.

Consequently exceptional circumstances exist to allow the development, which is procedurally major development, but in this instance is small in scale, and there are important material considerations in favour of the proposal such that it is in the public interest to allow the development in accordance with the Core Strategy policies GSP1, GSP2, GSP3, GSP4, DS1, MIN1, MIN3, CC1, CC5, L1, L2, L3, T1, and T4 and Local Plan policies LM1.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of background paper (not previously published)

None