

Addendum to the Minerals Local Plan Site Options and Draft Policy Framework Consultation

Additional Site Option



February 2015

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Between July and August 2014 Gloucestershire County Council undertook a consultation on the emerging Minerals Local Plan, which considered *Site Options* and a *Draft Policy Framework (SO&DPF)*¹.
- 1.2 Eighteen Sites (some containing more than one parcel of land) were presented for consultation. The information provided was based upon factual desk-based assessments and where appropriate, included input from technical experts and statutory consultees.
- 1.3 The eighteen sites represented a combination of proposals put forward by landowners, the minerals industry and / or were previously allocated preferred areas within the 2003 Minerals Local Plan, which have not yet been granted planning permission for working. All sites and individual parcels of land contained within them, were presented without preference or ranking. The consultation document and supporting evidence can be viewed via the Council website at:
<http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/extra/MLP-site-policy-options>
- 1.4 During the consultation an additional option, which can be described as an 'omission site' was presented to the Council. This option seeks to introduce the possibility of a depth extension to part of the existing Stowfield Quarry located in the Forest of Dean.
- 1.5 In order for the Council to consider this additional option objectively alongside the previously consulted upon sites, it is deemed necessary to subject it to public consultation. The consultation precedes any decision on which sites should go forward into the draft new Minerals Local Plan.
- 1.6 Accounting for currently available information, the additional option has been presented in a similar fashion to the previous consulted upon site options. The intention is for the additional option to have been subjected to a comparable level of public scrutiny.
- 1.7 **It should be stressed that, as before, no preference has been made as to whether this additional option should be taken forward alongside or ahead of any other site option previously subjected to public consultation.**

Consultation considerations

- 1.8 It may prove useful to bear in mind the content of the previous consultation, particularly the supporting evidence² when deciding to make any representations. Of likely significance, is the presence of any issues, which could affect the potential deliverability of this option and / or could require specific consideration in terms of satisfactorily

¹ All documentation available to view from <http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/extra/MLP-site-policy-options>

² Available from <http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/extra/MLP-site-policy-options>

demonstrating effective mitigation as part of any future planning application. Presently available information covering notable site matters has been provided in the profile summary contained within section 2 of this document.

- 1.9 The information presented forms a desk-based assessment compiled from secondary data that is currently available to use by the County Council. Further technical assessments, including field surveying may be required before any decisions on the draft new Minerals Local Plan can be taken. The outcome of this consultation may also have and influence upon the extent of any further assessments.
- 1.10 The details of the additional option are presented in section 2 of this document, by way of a revised site schedule from the *Site Options and Draft Policy Framework Evidence Paper: Site Options*³. The glossary and explanation of terms from the original evidence paper apply. For clarification the additional option has been labelled as '**Parcel C**'.
- 1.11 An independent Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has also been prepared for the additional option. The SA is available as a separate document. The HRA evidence base has also been updated to reflect this additional option.

Responding to the consultation

- 1.12 The consultation starts on Wednesday 4th February 2015 and we would very much appreciate responses by **Wednesday 18th March 2015** at the latest.
- 1.13 Representations can be made via the following link:
https://gloucestershire.consult.objective.co.uk/portal/planning/addit_site_opt
- 1.14 If you previously took part in the last minerals consultation you should be able to login to our consultation system with the same details (*if you previously submitted comments by email, we have forwarded login details to you*).
- 1.15 Alternatively, you can e-mail your response to mwplans@gloucestershire.gov.uk. This e-mail address can also be used if you any questions or experience any difficulties in making representations to us.

Previous consultation comments

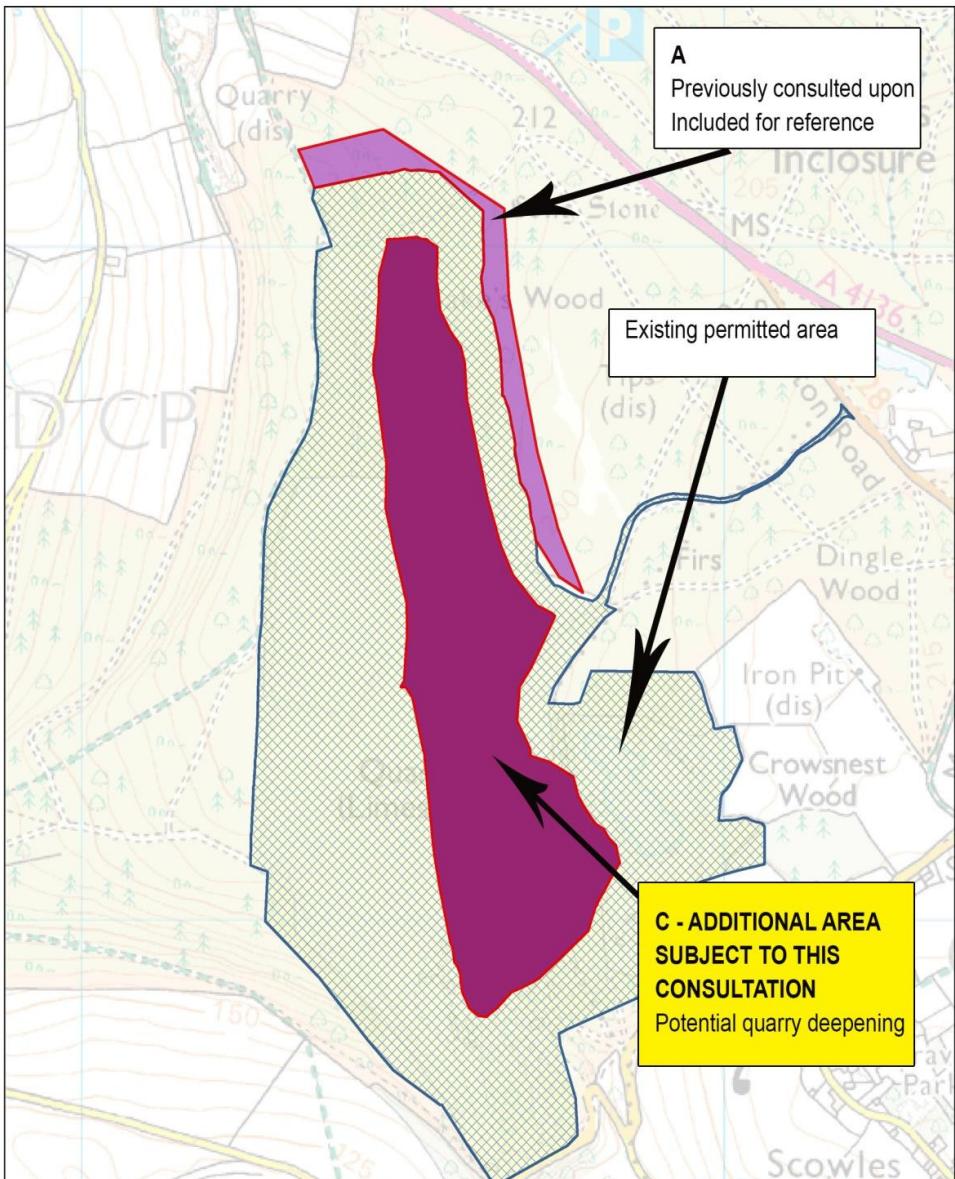
- 1.16 For clarification any representations that were received with the previous consultation remain unaffected, unless we are advised accordingly. We are not actively seeking any further comments at this time regarding the previous consultation, unless you believe any representations that were made, would be materially affected by the presence of the additional option.

³Viewable at: <http://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/extra/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=60558&p=0>

2.0 CRFD3 Stowfield Additional Site Schedule

Site Map

Site CRFD3 Stowfield Quarry - Addendum Consultation Draft



Existing Quarry Permitted Area



Additional Area - THIS CONSULTATION



Potential Site Allocation previously consulted upon

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3
Kilometers

Indicative Scale



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL



Locational Information

Site Details			
Site Description	Stowfield Quarry site is located near Staunton in the Forest of Dean. The additional area subject to consultation – Area C, has been submitted for consideration following the previous consultation. The submission proposes the potential to deepen an area within the existing Stowfield Quarry by an additional 20 metres beyond that which is currently permitted.		
Planning History	Stowfield Quarry (<i>which also incorporates Rogers Quarry</i>) has a long history of minerals permissions. The most recent permission (April 2011, Ref 09/0013/FDMAJM) consolidated a number of earlier consents. It also combined Stowfield Quarry with the adjacent Rogers Quarry and included an extension. The Forestry Commission woodland outside of the current permitted area has no known minerals planning history.		
District	Forest of Dean		
Parish	Coleford and Staunton Coleford		
Easting	355623	Northing	211312
Approximate Site Area (to nearest half hectare)	20		
Type of Mineral	Forest of Dean limestone		
Estimated Yield	Area C 7.4 million tonnes		
Reasons for inclusion & deliverability related to landownership / operator interest.	<p>Parcel C was submitted to the Council for consideration. The land contained within the current permitted boundary of the quarry is already in control of the mineral operator of Stowfield Quarry. Land outside of the permitted boundary forms part of the Forestry Commission estate. No evidence has been presented to date, which indicates that there is any landownership / controlling interest issue that will have an irreconcilable impact upon potential deliverability.</p> <p>For reference the previous consultation stated that the land identified as Parcel A had not been promoted by an operator. However, the current mineral operator has now stated that they support further consideration by the County Council of this parcel of land, for inclusion within the new Minerals Local Plan.</p>		

Site Assessment Factors/Criteria for Consideration

Landscape	
Landscape Character – National	Forest of Dean and Lower Wye
Landscape Character – County	Limestone Hills
Landscape Character – Local	Highmeadow Woods and Staunton Hills
AONB	The site is wholly within the Wye Valley AONB
Green Belt	
Comments	The site does not fall within the Gloucester/Cheltenham green belt.
Soil Quality (Agricultural Land Classification)	
No information currently available. However, as the land lies within the current permitted boundary, the soil and overburden has already been considered under the extant planning consent.	

Highways	
The Stowfield/Rogers site has a productive capacity 800,000tpa, potentially up to 1.2mtpa subject to meeting conditions within a legal agreement to provide contributions to road maintenance. A potential depth extension would be considered using the existing access and infrastructure and should therefore not breach the current productive capacity. The 2003 MLP indicated that traffic movement to and from the quarry should continue via the new access onto the A4316 as part of any proposals to extract minerals from within the Preferred Area.	

Public Rights of Way

(Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way (PROW) team)

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Sensitive Receptors

Distance from nearest address point	Holmlea (approx 250m)
Distance from nearest settlement	Scowles Caravan Park (approx 250m) Staunton (around 5-600m)

Aerodrome Safeguarding

(based on safeguarding maps provided by Gloucestershire Airport and the Ministry of Defence (MOD))

Comments The site does not lie within a known aerodrome safeguarding zone.

Ecology/Biodiversity

(Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Ecologist and the Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records (GCER))

The map displays the OLEFORD Conservation Area (CP) boundary in black. Key features include:

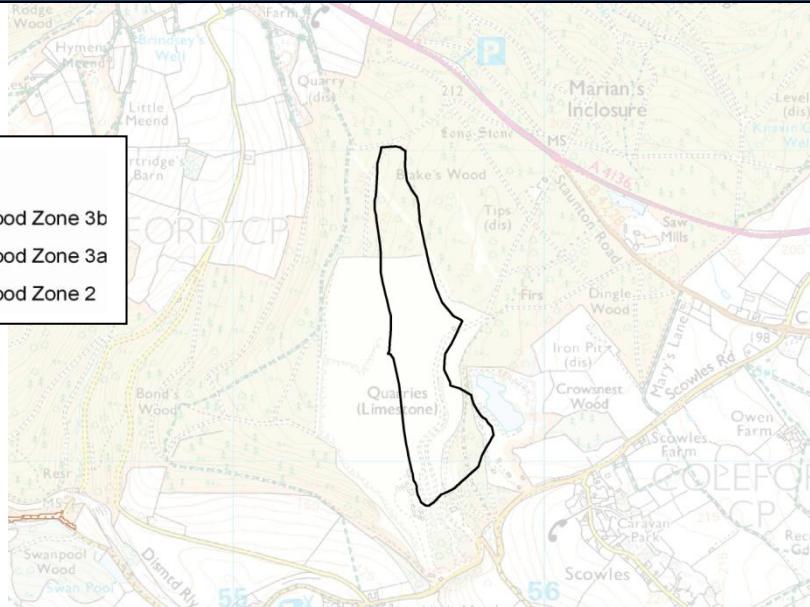
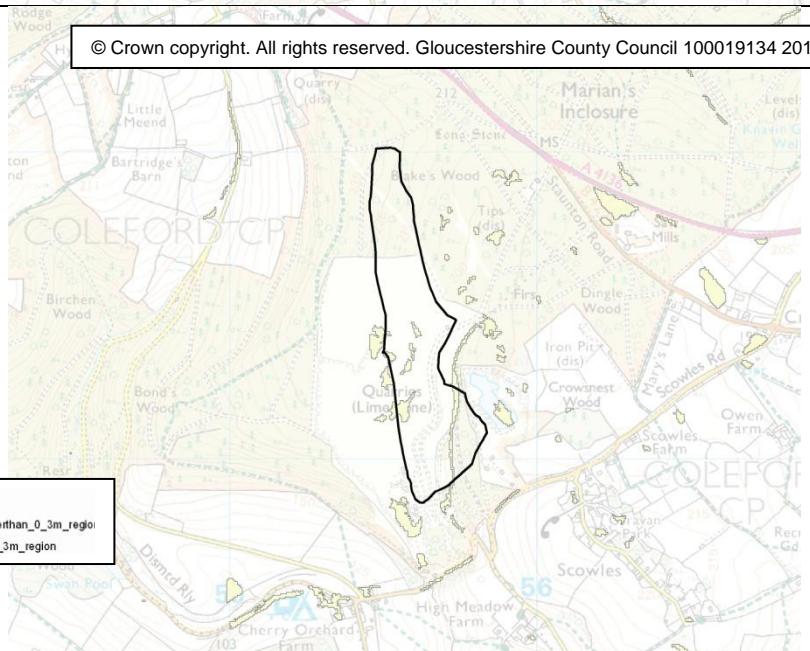
- SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest:** A green area covering parts of Bond's Wood and Dingles Wood.
- Key Wildlife Site - area:** A pink area covering parts of Bond's Wood, Dingles Wood, and Marian's Inclosure.
- Ramsar Site:** A blue area located in the bottom left corner.
- SAC Site:** A purple area located in the bottom left corner.
- SPA Site:** A light blue area located in the bottom right corner.

Other labeled locations include: Hymers Meend, Well, Quarry (dis), Little Meend, Bartridg's Barn, 211, Marian's Inclosure, MS, 212, Long Stoke, A 4136, B 4228, Saw Mills, Scowles Rd, 198, Mary's Lane, Iron Pit (dis), Crowsnest Wood, Scowles Farm, Owen Farm, Scowles, Caravan Park, 56, Disneth Rd, 55, and 213.

Parcel C (Potential Quarry Deepening)	
Overall Comment	Overall impact on biodiversity is potentially uncertain or positive
Nearby Internationally & Nationally Designated Sites	Wye Valley Woodlands SAC Dingle Wood SSSI, Swanpool Wood & Furnace Grove SSSI
Nearby Locally Designated Sites	Blakes Wood KWS, Whitecliffe Recreation Ground KWS, Staunton Woods KWS
Nearby Strategic Nature Areas and Priority Habitats	Wye Woods 1 SNA, Wye Woods 2 SNA Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Lowland Calcareous Grassland
Nearby Protected & Priority Species	Badger, polecat, dormouse, lesser horseshoe bat, great crested newt, slow worm, common toad, wood white butterfly, grizzled skipper, small pearl-bordered fritillary, small heath butterfly, pretty chalk carpet moth, cinnabar moth, house sparrow, lesser butterfly orchid and a rare non-flowering plant.
Key Development Criteria	<p>In respect of the General Development Criteria the presence of Wye Valley Woodlands Sites SAC, Dingle Wood SSSI and Swanpool Wood & Furnace Grove SSSI are confirmed as on, adjacent and nearby plus Blakes Wood KWS, Whitecliffe Recreation Ground KWS and Staunton Woods KWS as on, adjacent and within 1km of the land. Priority habitats plus protected and/or priority species have been recorded [on, adjacent and within 1km of the land].</p> <p>An existing consented quarry and its extension make up this site. There are already mitigation measures in place and a S106 fund has been secured to benefit the Wye Woods 1 SNA and a range of notable species in surrounding local areas nearby. The quarry is to be restored by a mixture of minimal landscaping and natural re-colonisation processes.</p> <p>Subject to the observations of statutory advisors a significant effect on Wye Valley Woodlands Sites SAC, Dingle Wood SSSI and Swanpool Wood & Furnace Grove SSSI is unlikely but any new/revised development upon this land should still be assessed for such impacts at the planning application stage.</p>

Geodiversity (Based on information provided by the Gloucestershire Geology Trust at the Geological Records Centre)	
Comments	Stowfield Quarry is designated as a RIGS local site, No. 237 (SO 555 111). There are no constraints within 250m of the area boundaries.
Key Development Criteria	It is recommended that, if quarrying is extended, or any infilling takes place, that one rock face along the complete E-W section is preserved, with an access ramp or path along it.

Archaeology and the Historic Environment (Based on information provided by Gloucestershire County Council's Archaeology team)	
Previous advice which is still valid, or any changed circumstances.	<p>Advice given in 1998 in connection with the previous Minerals Local Plan identified a number of archaeological sites within the area, of which the most significant were scowles in Blakes Wood. These natural hollows are a part of a cave system formed in the Crease Limestone and from which iron ore has been extracted probably from the late prehistoric period onwards. These features were identified as being of national importance to be excluded from the area identified for mineral extraction.</p> <p>Advice on planning applications for the existing quarry has covered the protection of the scowles and the recording of other archaeological features across the site.</p>
Nearby heritage assets	No further archaeological mitigation is required as this has already been undertaken within the existing quarry
The site distance from any historic feature set out above.	The scheduled scowles are adjacent to the existing quarry.
Gloucestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) status.	Type C1 Surviving early woodland.
Mitigation	No further archaeological mitigation is required as this has already been undertaken within the existing quarry
Key Development Criteria	Exclusion of the area of scowles from any proposed allocation for mineral working.

Water-related issues	
Flood risk	 <p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SFRA3 Flood Zone 3b SFRA3 Flood Zone 3a SFRA3 Flood Zone 2 <p>© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Gloucestershire County Council 100019134 2013</p>
Locally agreed surface water	 <p>© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Gloucestershire County Council 100019134 2013</p> <p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LocallyAgreedSWInfo_Greaterthan_0_3m_region LocallyAgreedSWInfo_0_1-0_3m_region
2003 MLP hydrological comments (based on the allocated preferred area)	<p>There is a large potable groundwater supply at Redbrook which must be protected. There are also many smaller licensed and unlicensed supplies in the vicinity. Ground conditions in the vicinity of Staunton make septic tank effluent disposal problematical. The result is a layer of sewage effluent below the ground surface around Staunton. Proposals for mineral working should not breach the clay layer. Any proposals for mineral working would require pre-application monitoring of groundwater conditions. In particular the location of the impermeable base to the Lower Dolomite formation should be ascertained. Proposals for mineral working should not breach this impermeable layer.</p> <p>N.B. These comments relate to an area, which was much greater in extent to that under consideration as part of this consultation.</p>
Contaminated Land	<p>There are no landfills listed on the Environment Agency's Historic Landfill GIS layer within the parcel A or 250m of its boundary.</p>
Gloucester Flood Authority Comments relating to Flooding	
The site's SW flood risk (using Locally Agreed Surface Water Information)	Without formal management of the surface water, the risks posed would be an accumulation of surface water to the site, and possibly increased runoff rates and volumes,

	hence increasing flood risk to the site and downstream. A formal drainage system to attenuate the increased runoff would be expected as a minimum, it would be possible to achieve this through implementing a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)."
Surrounding area SW flood risk(using Locally Agreed Surface Water Information)	Modelling suggests surface water issues exists throughout the site.
Groundwater using EA's Areas Susceptible to Ground Water Flooding (Area classification - proportion of each 1 km square that is susceptible to groundwater flood emergence)	<25%
Records of flooding (GCC's Flood Data Register)	No known reports of flooding.
Any other known issues	None.
Gloucester Flood Authority Comments relating to Watercourses and Drainage	
Water course(s) flowing through, bordering or near to the site(s) (using SFRA Watercourses and the Environmental Agency's Detailed River Network)	No known main or ordinary watercourses locally.
Consenting authority under section 23 of the Land Drainage Act 1991	n/a
Enforcement authority under Sections 21, 24 and 25 of the Land Drainage Act 1991	n/a
Gloucester Flood Authority Comments relating to the Water Framework Directive (information from EA's What's In Your Backyard)	
Ecological status of watercourse(s) within the proposed site catchment.	No known main or ordinary watercourses locally.
GW Vulnerability Zone	The site overlies a principal aquifer.
GW quantitative quality	Good
GW source protection zone	Not within a designated Groundwater source protection zone.
Ecological status of lake(s) within the proposed site catchment	Lake exists to the west of the Crowsnest Wood in the existing Stowfield quarry– Moderate ecological quality.

General Comments / Potential Development Criteria

The potential of additional working through a depth extension has the likely advantage of being able to utilise existing site infrastructure, negating requirements to identify any lateral expansion of operations to accommodate ancillary facilities.

The MLP (2003) advised as to the possibility of facilitating working below the current depth restrictions.

Existing permitted reserves at Stowfield quarry are likely to be sufficient to cover the current proposed plan period – to 2030. However, the operator has advised that additional reserves would be necessary for the period beyond.

In considering a depth extension, a number of key issues are likely to require careful consideration. Those listed below are: -

- Landscape and visual impacts; and
- Hydrological impacts

