PANSHANGER QUARRY

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

PLANNING APPLICATION TO ENHANCE THE RESTORATION OF PHASES F AND H AT PANSHANGER QUARRY THROUGH THE IMPORTATION OF INERT RESTORATION MATERIALS VIA A PROPOSED NEW ACCESS OFF

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PANSHANGER QUARRY HERTFORDSHIRE

NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Application to enhance the restoration of Phases F and H at Panshanger Quarry, by importing inert restoration materials via a proposed new access off Panshanger Lane.

January 2015

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SECTION 1

Introduction to Panshanger Quarry

The site

Panshanger sand and gravel quarry is about 2 kilometres east of Welwyn Garden City. Part of the quarry is within the grounds of Panshanger Park, a designated grade 2* listed historic park and garden.

As part of the 2003 Review of the Mineral Planning Permission for Panshanger Quarry, there are approved, phased working and restoration schemes for the site, including the area of land in the south, referred to as **Phases F, G and H**.

Quarry access is via a purpose built access road off Panshanger Lane (the western site boundary) – which in turn provides links to the A414 (which forms the southern site boundary).

The location plan shows the overall site in its local context. The application site comprises Phases F and H, on the higher terrace of ground south of the River Mimram. None of the application site is within the country park boundary.

Most of the current mineral extraction is in **Phase H**, next to the A414. Access to this phase is via a 1.1 kilometre internal road, to and from the processing plant site.

The northern boundary of **Phase F**, is a belt of mature woodland on an area known as the Chisel Shelf.

On productive arable land south of the A414 – and adjacent to the hamlets of Cole Green and Birch Green – **Phase G** is the only remaining consented, undisturbed phase at the site.

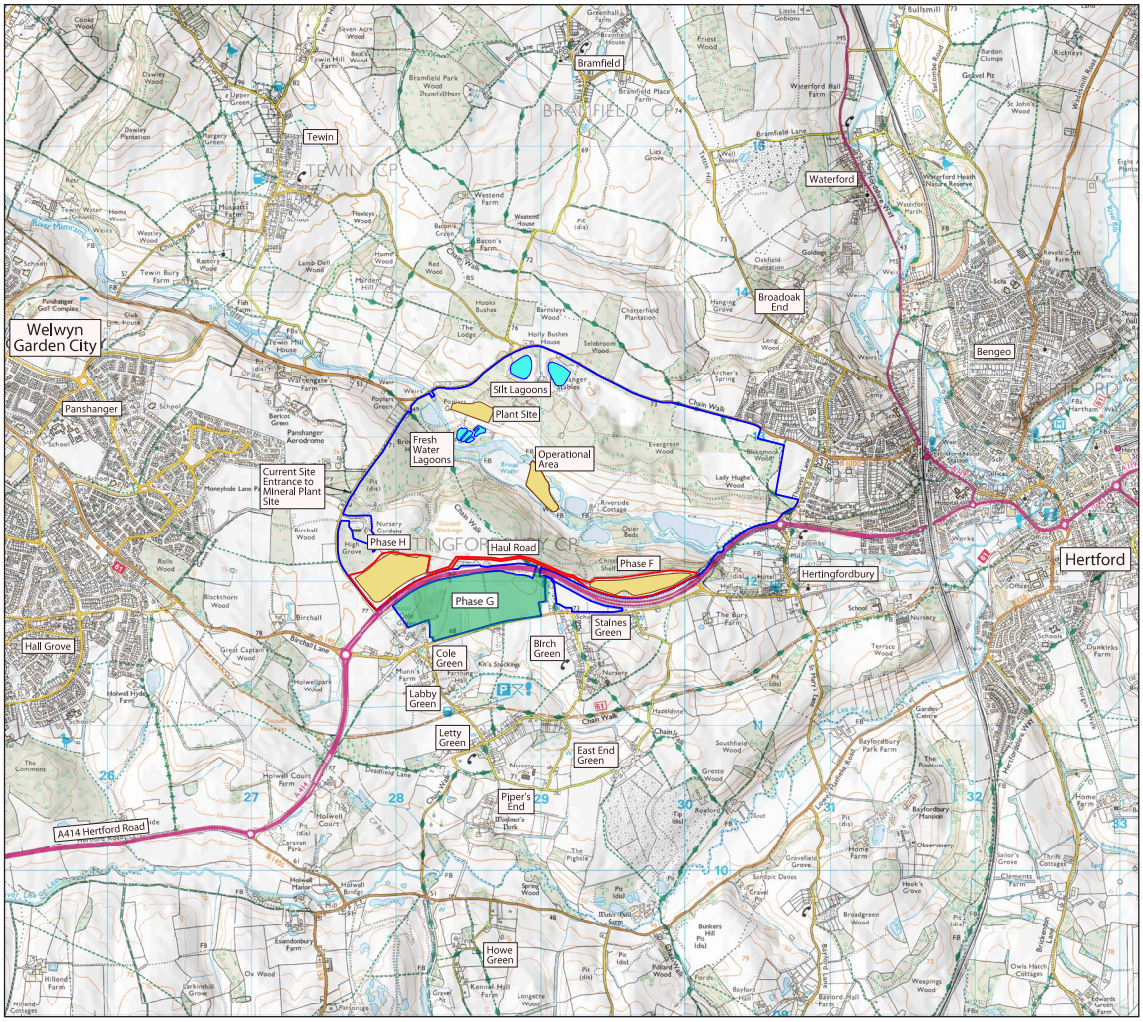
The application

The approved restoration scheme provides for the application area (Phases F & H), to be restored back to agriculture with some woodland planting, at a lower ground level – approximately 4 metres below pre-existing levels.

Lafarge Tarmac has submitted a planning application to Hertfordshire County Council, seeking permission to import inert restoration materials – via a proposed new access to the quarry – to deliver an improved restoration scheme within Phases F and H. As part of these proposals, land south of the A414 at Cole Green (Phase G) would be left as undisturbed agricultural land. Phases F and H would be restored back to near pre-existing levels.

This approach would provide the opportunity to recreate an informal parkland landscape (typical of the landscaped parks and gardens designed by Humphry Repton), providing a long term enhancement to this designated and listed historic landscape.

The scheme also proposes to restore Phase F to neutral/acid grassland with benefits to nature conservation, consistent with the objectives of the wider site.



NTS 1
Location Plan

Key

- Application boundary
- Land within the applicants control
- Current operational areas
- Lagoons
- Land already consented for mineral extraction

Site name: Panshanger Quarry

Location Plan

Drawn By: L.M.B / R.J.S
Scale @ A3: 1:25,000
Date: Nov 2014
Drawing Number: P301/PL/4/01

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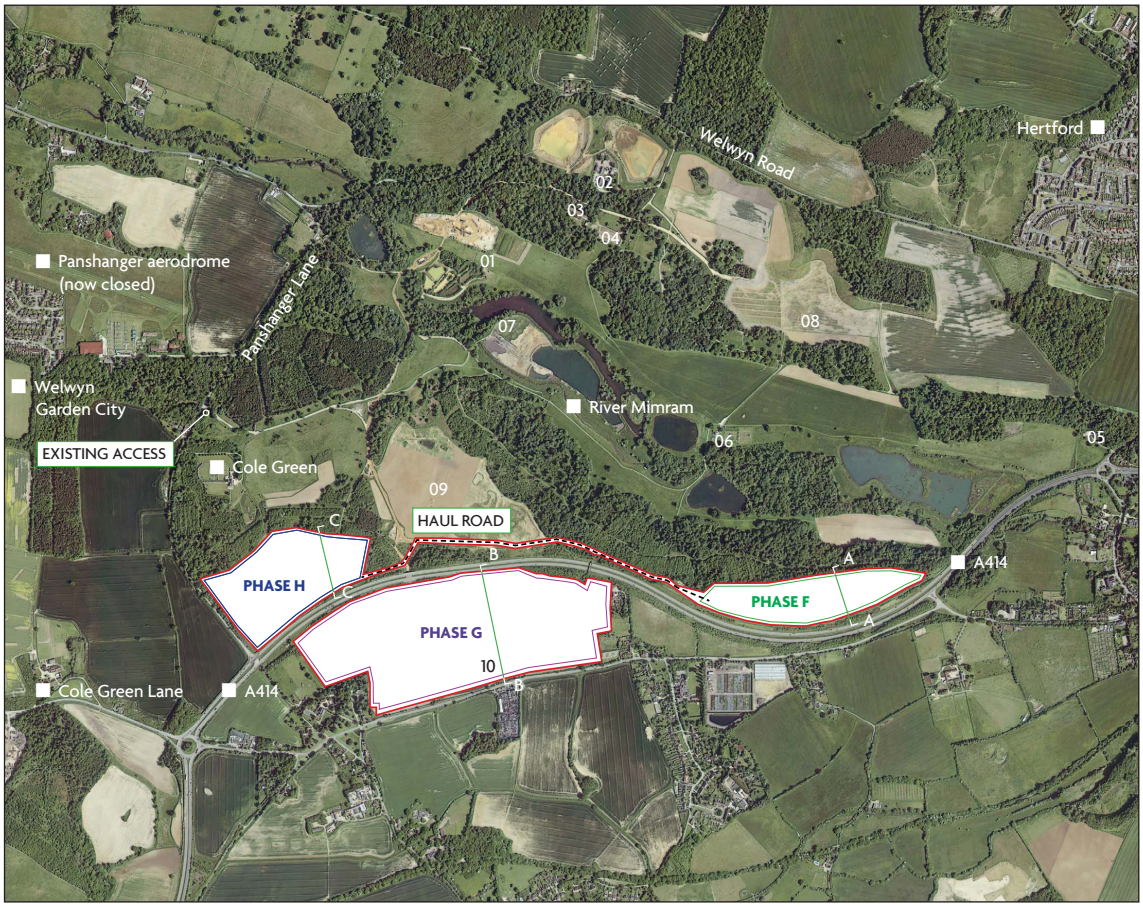
SECTION 2

Key facts

- Approved quarry area (including non disturbed ground, active areas and restored land — 420 hectares
- Proposed application area (Phases F & H) — 22.7 hectares (of the 420 hectares)
- Duration of importation of inert restoration materials (based on 150 - 200,000 tonnes a year) — 8 - 10 years
- Potential maximum number of vehicle movements — 120/day (60 in and 60 out)
- The planning application **does not** seek to:
    - change the hours of working (07:00 - 18:00 Monday - Friday and 07:00 - 13:00 Saturday)
    - change any of the existing environmental monitoring procedures.
- The planning application **does** seek to:
    - enhance the current restoration scheme
    - protect the long term integrity of the designated parkland landscape
    - provide further biodiversity benefits over and above the consented scheme
    - safeguard 7 jobs on site, together with other indirect employment.

SECTION 3

Permitted operations



NTS 2 Permitted Operations
Phases F, G and H

Key

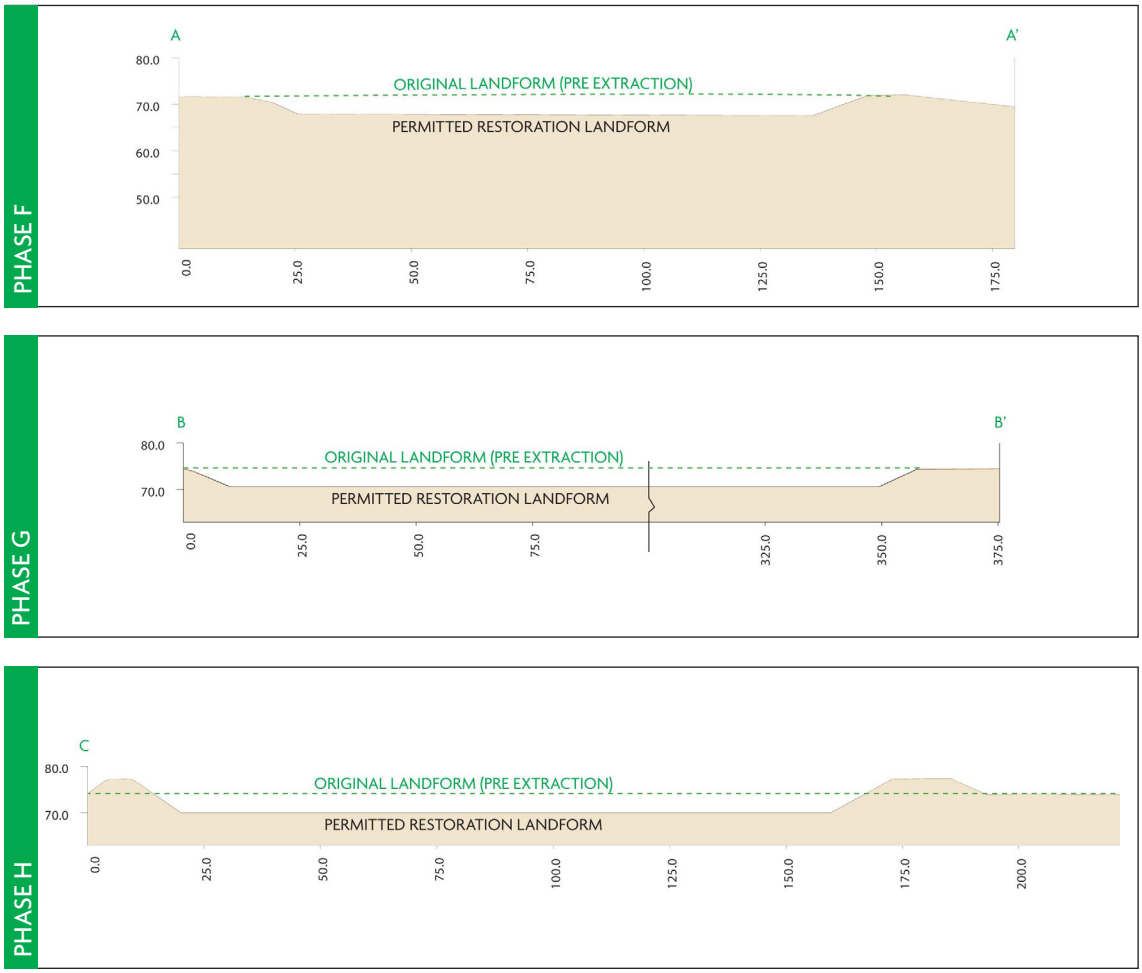
Application boundary

01	Plant site	07	Unrestored extraction areas
02	The Stables	08	Restored agricultural land
03	The Orangery	09	Restored land
04	The site of the original Panshanger House	10	Currently permitted source of restoration materials for Phase F and G
05	Thieves Lane car park		
06	Riverside Cottage		

3.1 Permitted operations

- Complete mineral extraction from within Phase H
- Remove soils from Phase G and temporarily place them in storage bunds (mounds) within Phase G
- Extract overburden and other restoration materials from Phase G and transport them underneath the A414 – using the existing tunnel – to restore Phases F and H
- Use soils stored temporarily in bunds around Phases F and H to re-establish soil profiles within these phases
- Replace soils temporarily stored around Phase G to recreate low level restored agricultural land within Phase G
- Plant Phase F for woodland habitats, consistent with the biodiversity objectives of the wider site.

Land disturbance as part of the currently permitted scheme – 53.7 hectares (132.7 acres)



Permitted Scheme – Sections

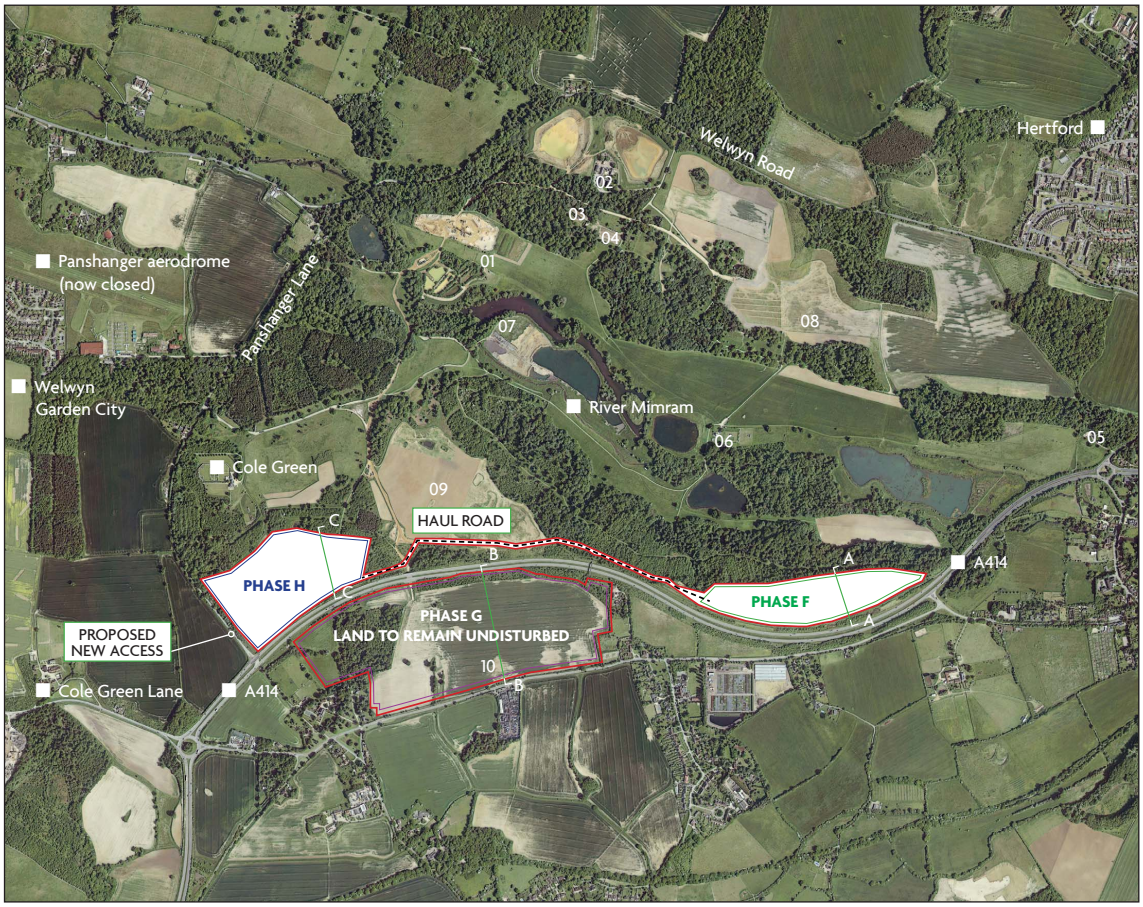
3.2 Permitted restoration

The currently permitted working and restoration schemes will result in the creation of 3 bowl-shaped landforms in Phases F, G and H – approximately 4 metres below the original ground level.

Under the current permission, the agricultural land south of the A414 at Cole Green (Phase G) would be dug to provide restoration materials for Phases F and H.

SECTION 4

Proposed operations – and restoration scheme



NTS 3 Proposed Operations
Phases F and H

Key

Application boundary

01	Plant site	07	Unrestored extraction areas
02	The Stables	08	Restored agricultural land
03	The Orangery	09	Restored land
04	The site of the original Panshanger House	10	Currently permitted source of restoration materials for Phase F and G
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06	Riverside Cottage		

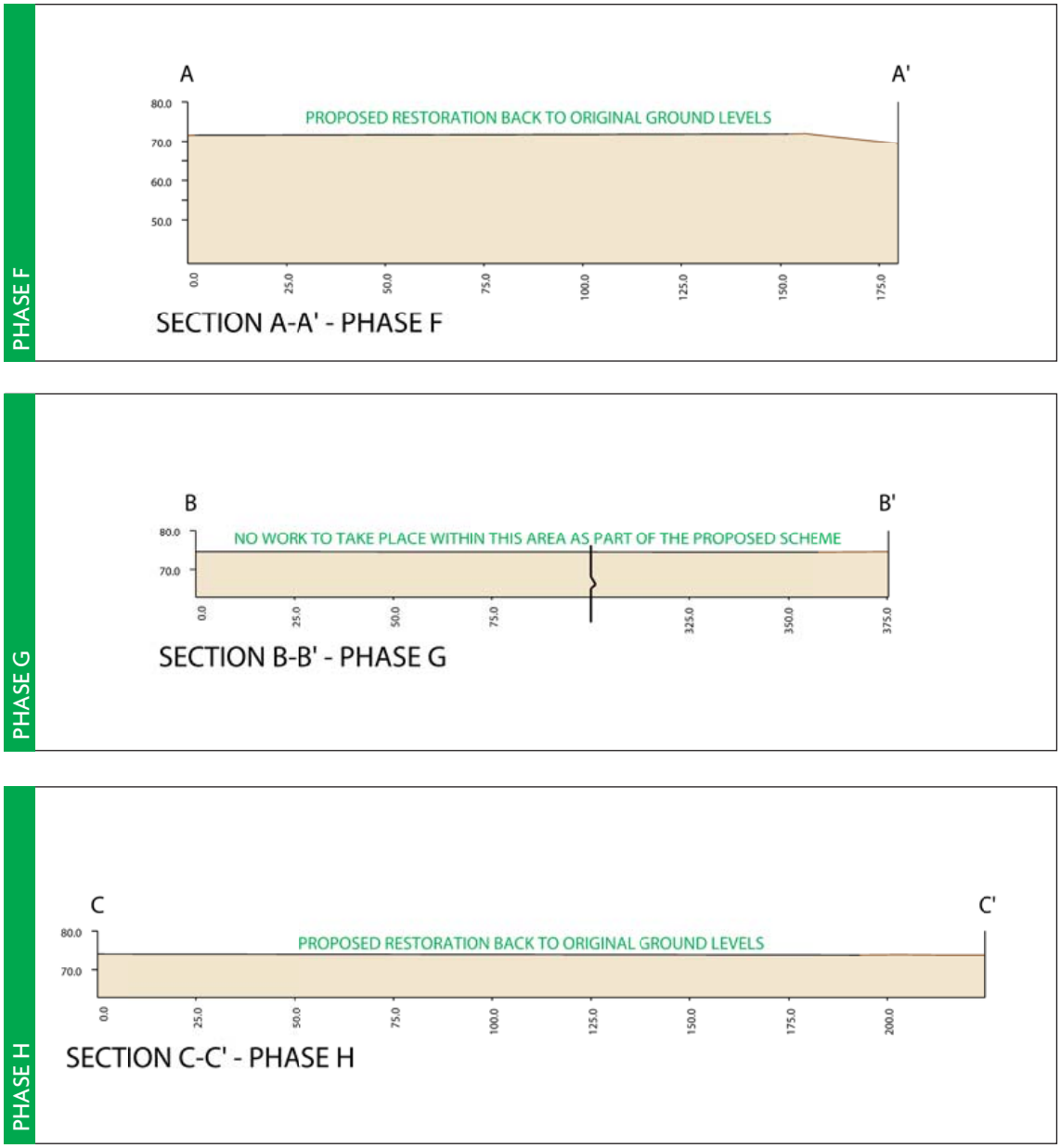
4.1 Proposed operations

- The site would be operated to existing permitted hours, 07:00 - 1800 Monday - Friday and 07:00 - 1300 Saturday
- No working on Sundays or public bank holidays
- Create new vehicular access off Panshanger Lane into Phase H and establish a new weighbridge, car park and site offices
- Import inert fill material, initially to restore land within Phase F – followed by Phase H
- Directly place soils stored around Phases F and H to facilitate restoration back to near original ground levels
- Plant/seed for amenity grassland/grazing use in Phase H and woodland habitats in Phase F
- Create Permissive Route along internal haul road in line with approved scheme, providing a north - south link via the underpass from Panshanger Park to Cole Green south of the A414 - immediately after the restoration of Phase F.

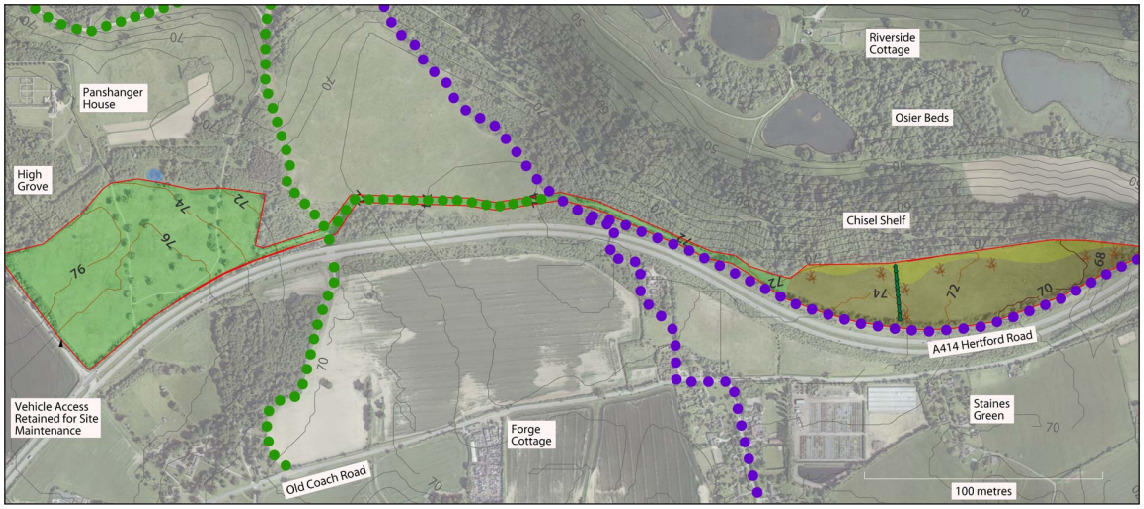
Land disturbance as part of the proposed scheme – 23.9 hectares (59 acres)

4.2 Proposed restoration scheme

The proposed restoration scheme would offer long term net enhancements to the landscape and cultural heritage settings at and around Phase H, above and beyond the existing permitted restoration scheme. This would be made possible because all the land would be restored back to near original ground levels.



Proposed Scheme – Sections



NTS 4
Proposed restoration Phases F and H

Key

- Application boundary
- 70 Restoration contours (m aOD)
- Parkland restoration
- Species rich acid grassland meadow restoration
- Woodland edge/scrub habitat
- Symbol respresenting exposed areas of sandy substrate/ hibernacula
- Reinstated hedgerow
- Undisturbed pond
- Public rights of way
- Proposed permissive bridleway

Photo images representational of the type of restoration land uses.

Parkland

Hibernacula within meadow restoration

Woodland edge planting

Acid grassland meadow

SECTION 5

Benefits of the proposed operations and restoration scheme

If consented, the scheme could create additional benefits including:

- Much earlier public access by car to the country park from the west of the site, via the existing quarry access – because the quarry access is no longer required by HGVs – which would use the new access
- Maintaining the already permitted Phase G (south of the A414) as undisturbed land – because all operations would remain north of the A414
- The opportunity to re-create an informal parkland typical of the original Humphry Repton landscape – because the proposed restoration contours would restore the land to near original levels
- A reduction in long term vehicle movements along Panshanger Lane, north of the proposed new access, once that new access is established
- Creating a more natural visual effect on the southern edge of the Chisel Shelf woodland – because the proposed Phase F restoration scheme would create a softer, more sympathetic landform
- Enhancing biodiversity along the southern perimeter of the Chisel Shelf and the grassland – because species-rich acid grassland would be developed. Dead wood receptors (hibernacula) would be provided for reptiles and bare, sandy substrates would be created to encourage invertebrates.

SECTION 6

Other Matters

6.1 Vehicle Movements/Access

- The existing consented access is directly off Panshanger Lane
- The proposed new internal access road would be directly into Phase H, reducing long term HGV movements along Panshanger Lane
- The new road would be surfaced to the weighbridge, to prevent mud being drawn on to the highway. It would be long enough – and with enough capacity – to accommodate internal queuing of HGVs
- The new junction would be set back 90 metres from the junction of Panshanger Lane with the A414. The access would be a simple bell mouth junction with appropriate radii to accommodate articulated HGV movements
- The access would need visibility splays, which would mean removing three trees along Panshanger Lane. One of these has been struck by lightning and is already dying – the others are elm suckers and hawthorn of no ecological or arboricultural value
- The detailed access design would be delivered via a Section 278 Agreement under the Highways Act 1980. While the legal agreement is being completed, the existing access would be used to start importing inert restoration materials
- All infrastructure at the existing processing plant site would be removed around 2017. The existing quarry access could then be made available for much earlier, direct public access into the country park, from the western side of the site.

6.2 Public Consultation

Over the last two years, Lafarge Tarmac has been actively engaging with local stakeholders and the local community about a wide range of related matters, at both the quarry and the park.

This planning application was incorporated in to a consultation event during October 2014. Display boards included details on the existing site operations, proposed restoration and the potential benefits deriving from any new consent.

Generally, the scheme was well received – and local individuals and user groups supported both the proposals to keep site operations north of the A414 and the aspiration to enhance the restoration landform within Phases F and H.

The operational site is currently managed through a series of technical and liaison groups. These groups would continue as part of both the existing site – and the proposed sub site within Phases F and H. In this way, the local community would continue to be informed and consulted on all site related matters.

6.3 Employment

- The current Panshanger Quarry provides direct employment for 7 members of staff
- The existing operation also supports several indirect jobs through the regular hiring of specialist contractors, maintenance technicians and hauliers
- These proposals would secure the long term future employment for both these direct and indirect employees.

SECTION 7

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

In line with the Environmental Impact Regulations, independent technical consultants carried out assessments and surveys to identify any potential impacts (positive and negative). As part of a broader evaluation known as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), they also considered the significance of any such effects.

The outcomes are summarised below:

- **Landscape and visual impact**
  The proposals would have a net beneficial effect on landscape character by bringing forward the consented end date to complete site operations – and reinstating near original land levels. The originally proposed low level bowls are not typical of the local landscape

- **Cultural heritage and the historic landscape**
  The proposals would not increase the footprint of the overall scheme and would therefore not impact on the cultural heritage of the area. There would be short term, minor adverse effects during the operational phase. However these would be more than outweighed by the benefits of the revised restoration proposals. These include improvements to the local character setting and to the setting of Panshanger House and other local heritage assets

- **Hydrology and Hydrogeology**
  With appropriate mitigation, there would be no negative impacts on water resources, within or adjacent to Phases F and H. All surface water runoff would be managed so there would be no uncontrolled discharges. The assessment submitted as part of the EIA also considered potential flood risk – and concluded there are no flood risk issues.

- **Traffic**
  The proposals detailed in this application would not result in any material impact on the safety or operation of the adjacent highway network.

- **Noise**
  Potential receptors in the area were considered. Detailed assessment confirmed the proposals could be implemented within government guidelines and are unlikely to cause disturbance.

- **Dust**
  Good practice guidance and additional mitigation measures have been identified. These are accepted by both central government and local planning authorities as providing effective protection against airborne dust from sand and gravel sites, during both extraction and restoration. Continued good practice would make sure future site operations would not cause unacceptable dust impacts at any property around the site.

EIA Conclusion

- The proposals would provide the opportunity for long term enhancement to the designated landscape in and around Panshanger Park, with beneficial effects anticipated across a range of technical criteria. The scheme represents the most sustainable way of restoring the site, by providing resources so Phase G can be retained undisturbed.

- No significantly adverse effects have been identified during the operation or post-development phases that would warrant refusal of consent.

SECTION 8

Conclusion

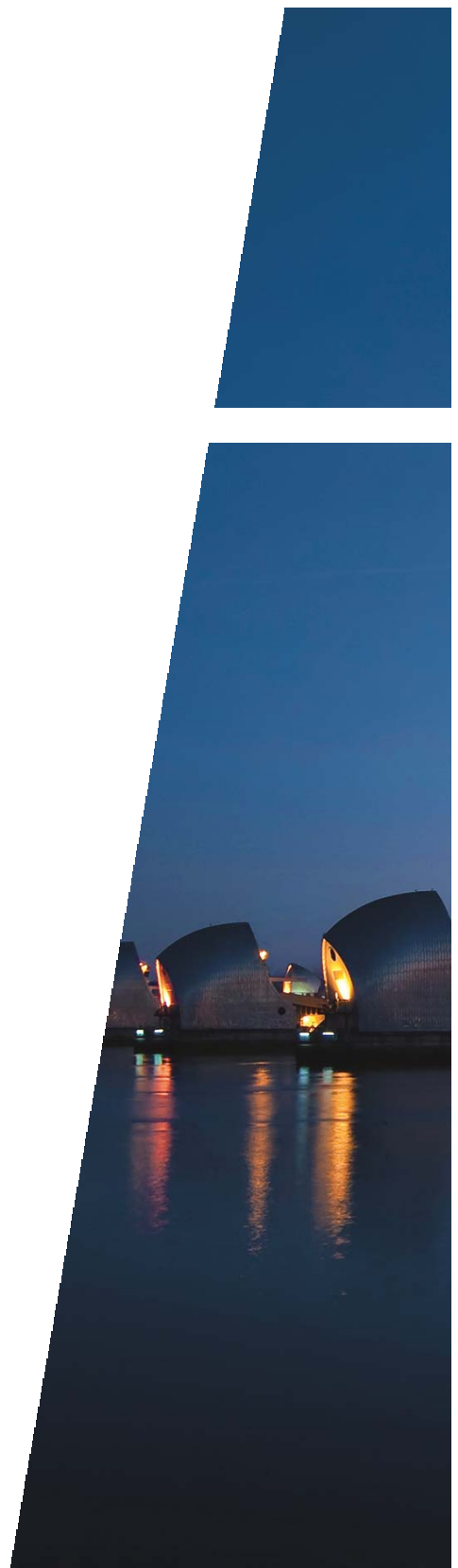
- This is a Non Technical Summary (NTS) of the Environmental Statement that accompanies the planning application submitted by Lafarge Tarmac to enhance the restoration of Phases F and H at Panshanger Quarry, by importing inert restoration materials via a proposed new access off Panshanger Lane

- Under the existing permitted scheme, restoration materials for Phases F and H would be mainly sourced from Phase G, south of the A414. However, following a review of the geological information, the mineral resource in Phase G is now considered uneconomic and Lafarge Tarmac no longer proposes to work this phase. This requires a change in both the site phasing and the restoration

- If Phase G is not to be worked, the shortfall in restoration materials has to be made up by importing inert restoration materials, via a new access off Panshanger Lane. The application area only covers Phases F and H. Importing restoration materials would allow Lafarge Tarmac to restore the approved extraction phases to near original levels. This is desirable given the historic setting of the park and garden designation

- The proposed new access would both constrain the extent of site activities and allow the release of the existing site access to users of Panshanger Country Park. (None of the application site is within the country park boundary)

- Permitting these proposals would safeguard 7 on-site jobs, as well as providing indirect employment benefits. These would affect not only the company's haulier fleet and sub-contractors, but would also provide indirect support to the network of added value operations and construction projects which are supplied by construction materials quarried and processed at Panshanger.



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