

1.0 Introduction.

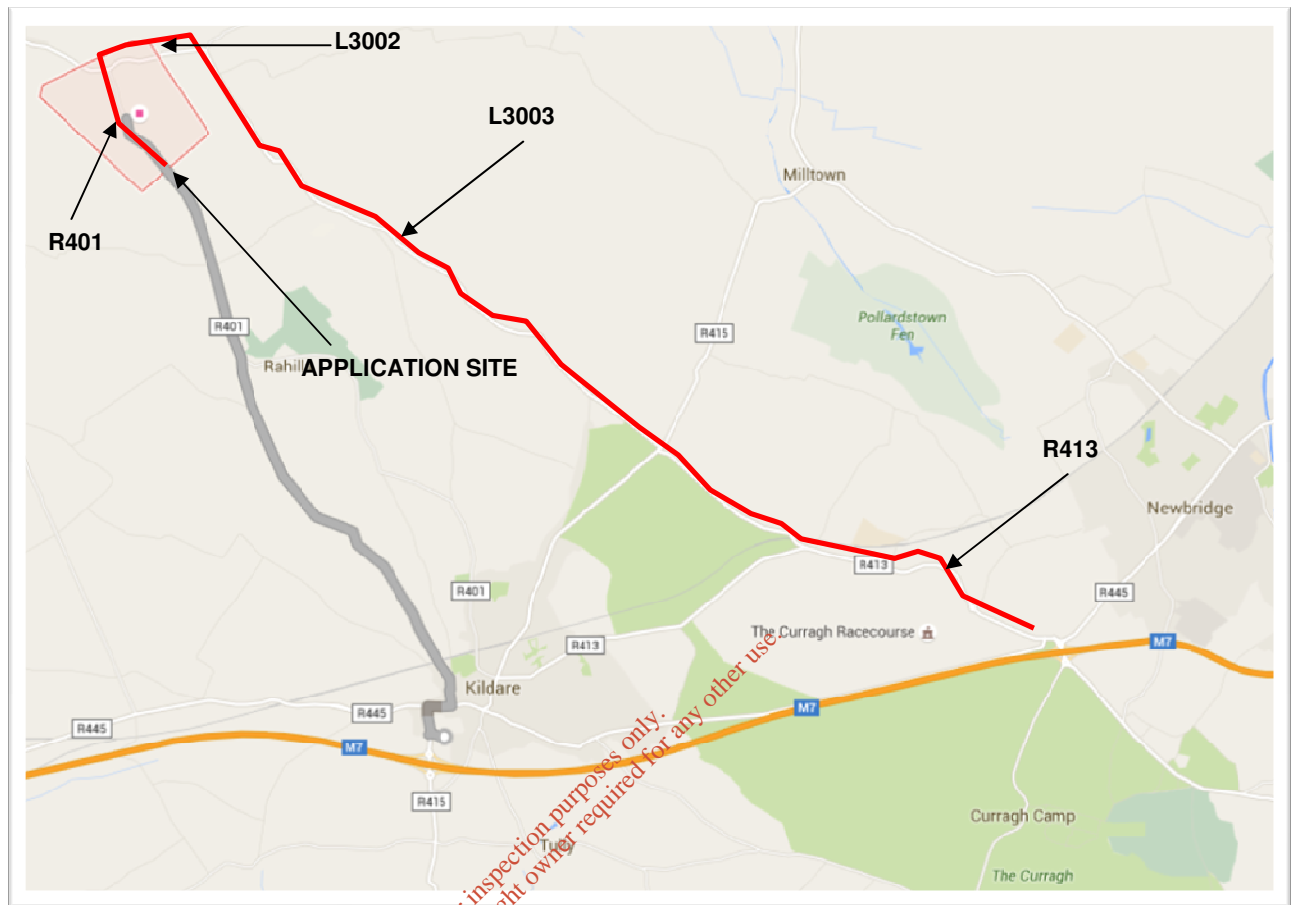
- 1.1 TPS Limited has been retained to prepare a Traffic Report relating to the reinstatement operation of an existing gravel pit facility at Boherhill, Rathangan, County Kildare. This existing gravel pit was granted planning permission by Kildare County Council (Planning Ref: 07/188) in August 2008.
- 1.2 The gravel extraction relating to this planning permission has to date extracted 1,123,786m³ of gravel material. Some 91,376m³ of overburden has been temporarily relocated elsewhere within the site.
- 1.3 The existing gravel pit operates from 0800hrs to 1800hrs Monday to Friday inclusive (excluding bank holidays) and between 0800hrs and 1300hrs on Saturdays. The gravel pit is closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

2.0 Proposed Gravel Pit Reinstatement.

- 2.1 It is now proposed to apply to Kildare County Council to reinstate the gravel pit and return the land to similar levels to that which prevailed prior to the gravel extraction. In order to reinstate these lands it is proposed to seek planning permission from Kildare County Council to reinstate this land area over a ten year period.
- 2.2 We understand that when this reinstatement is complete the lands would then be used for agricultural purposes.

3.0 Current Planning Permission 07/188.

- 3.1 As previously discussed Kildare County Council granted planning permission for extraction of gravel at this site in 2008. The permission was for a 7 year extraction period with an annual extraction limit of 265,650 tonnes.
- 3.2 Specific to this planning application Kildare County Council set out 3 traffic and transportation related planning conditions within this grant of permission. They were:
 - Condition 2 d) related to a maximum of 50 inbound and outbound vehicles in both directions accessing the site per day.
 - Condition 17 related to lines of sight within the site access being in accordance with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
 - Condition 23 related to the erection of advance warning signage being erected 150.0 metres either side of the site access
- 3.3 Haul routes to and from the site via the R401 were agreed with the local authority. It should be noted that the southbound route from the gravel pit was via Kildare Town and then eastwards to Junction 12 of the M7 motorway. The route to the M7 motorway was altered for heavy vehicles accessing the motorway when the Kildare Town Bypass opened in December 2003. Heavy vehicles then used Junction 13 to access the motorway.
- 3.4 These general haul routes are shown indicated in red and dotted in red within Map 1.0 and Map 2.0 below:



Haul Route

Map 1.0

4.0 Existing Gravel Pit Operation.

- 4.1 The gravel pit site is bounded to the west by the R401 which functions as an 80kph regional road within Kildare County Council's road hierarchy.
- 4.2 Along the length of the R401 vehicular access is provided to individual residential properties, farm holdings and agricultural farmlands with all of these access points taking the form of simple gated agricultural access points or simple priority 'T' junction arrangements.
- 4.3 Thus, it can be considered that the principle of direct vehicular access to serve land use development from this road is well established in this area.
- 4.4 The existing gravel pit site is accessed from the R401 by means of a wide simple priority 'T' junction. This access also contains a localised widening of the R401 to 7.5 metres for a general distance of 50.0 metres upstream and downstream of the site access
- 4.5 The general layout of the existing access and the localised road widening of the R401 in this area is shown within Photograph 1.0, Photograph 2.0 and Photograph 3.0 below:



Photograph 1.0: Southbound view into R401 from existing gravel pit access.



Photograph 2.0: Northbound view into R401 from existing site access.



Photograph 3.0: View to the east from R401 into existing site access.

- 4.6 It can be seen from the above that the roads and traffic conditions assigned to the grant of planning permission for the gravel pit have been fully implemented. In addition this access has been designed to a standard that provides sightlines within the site access that accords with the standards set out with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
- 4.7 During our site visits all traffic entering or exiting the existing gravel pit access was observed to undertake these inbound and outbound manoeuvres with no difficulty and these vehicles had no material or operational impact on the traffic using the R401.
- 4.8 The hedgerows towards the northern side of the existing site access can be relocated outside of the required 2.4m X 150.0m visibility splay into the leading traffic direction of the R401.
- 4.9 At present some limited gravel extraction takes place with some 4 to 5 heavy vehicles accessing the site per day. This extent of heavy vehicle trips is well below the permitted 50 inbound and 50 outbound heavy vehicles conditioned within the 07/188 planning permission.
- 4.10 Upstream and downstream of this site access is road signage advising all road users of the potential that heavy vehicles may be undertaking turning manoeuvres ahead. Within the site is a wheel wash used by exiting vehicles to limit the extent of debris being carried onto the R401. These measures also comply with the above planning conditions assigned to the 07/188 planning permission.

5.0 Proposed Gravel Pit Reinstatement.

- 5.1 As previously discussed the gravel pit has extracted some 1,123,786 m³ of gravel material with 91,376 m³ of overburden relocated within the site. Based on the Environmental Protection Agency conversion factor this equates to some 1.5 million tonnes of inert material required to reinstate this gravel pit.
- 5.2 If the above is applied to the reinstatement of the gravel pit over a ten year period then 150,000 tonnes per annum would be required to reinstate the gravel pit.
- 5.3 Typically this reinstatement would operate for 46 weeks of a year allowing for annual leave, builders holidays, bank holidays and Christmas holidays. Generally the working week is 5 1/2 days with early closing on Saturday afternoon.
- 5.4 Over this 5 1/2 day week just over 3260 tonnes of inert material could be imported which results in 592 tonnes per day being imported. From our experience of similar operations the average heavy vehicle can carry 20 tonnes of inert material which based on the above gives rise to 30 heavy vehicles per day accessing and departing the site.
- 5.5 As previously discussed the existing planning permission within Condition 2 d) permits a maximum of 50 inbound and outbound vehicles in both directions accessing the site per day.
- 5.6 We understand from discussions with the applicant and the existing gravel pit operator that no incident or third party complaint has been made in relation to the current gravel pit operation or the haul routes being used by the operator.
- 5.7 In traffic terms the heavy vehicles associated with the proposed reinstatement of the gravel pit can be regarded as already accessing this site from the adjacent road network albeit removing gravel product under the current planning permission.
- 5.8 As such the traffic impact of reinstating the gravel pit can be regarded as neutral.

6.0 Conclusions.

- 6.1 This existing gravel pit was granted planning permission by Kildare County Council in August 2008. Under this planning permission a maximum of 50 inbound and outbound vehicles in both directions can access the site per day.
- 6.2 The existing site access has been designed to accord with the standards set out with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges.
- 6.3 The haul routes to the existing gravel pit have operated without incident or complaint in relation to heavy vehicles accessing or departing the site.
- 6.4 The reinstatement of the gravel pit would require some 1.5 million tonnes of inert material to be imported or relocated within the site over a ten year period. It is projected that 1,500,000 tonnes would be imported per year which could give rise to some 30 inbound and outbound heavy vehicle trips.
- 6.5 This level of daily heavy vehicle trips is less than permitted under the current planning permission and can be readily accommodated within the existing road network.

For inspection purposes only.
Consent of copyright owner required for any other use.