

The proposed development is located in the rural townland of Graney West, which is east of Castledermot town. The site area of the quarry is 21.6 hectares. The site has been an operating sand and gravel pit since the 1930's. The area is very rural in character with the main landuse being agriculture. The site has very little frontage and agricultural lands surround the majority of the subject site. The site comprises of 2 fields, 2 of which are used for sowing rapeseed oil and the larger field is extensively quarried. There are a number of dwellings within the greater vicinity of the site. The quarried area consists of excavated areas, mounds and lagoons. The north of the site is bounded by hedgerow and the south of the site is bounded by Graney River.

The site currently contains, 3 mobile screening and washing units, 1 batching house, 3 fixed and 2 mobile conveyors, 10 bins, 2 cement towers, bunded storage areas for fuel and concrete.

Internal Reports

This application was referred to the following, reports received as indicated below. Please refer to the specific report on file should further details be required.

Area Engineer: Raised concerns about the poor conditions of the road referred to roads design.

Environment: CFI requested

Sanitary Services: FI requested updated report is on file with conditions.

Roads Design: CFI requested

CFO: No objection.

EHO: Report on file with conditions.

Heritage Officer: FI requested updated report is on file with conditions.

Prescribed Bodies

This application was referred to the following, reports received as indicated below. Please refer to the specific report on file should further details be required.

An Comhairle Ealaoin: No report on file or Pc-Doc.

National Heritage Council: response received issues raise with regard to archaeology. Recommends the planning authority should satisfy itself that the proposed would not impact on the material asset of architectural heritage.

Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government: No objection subject to conditions.

EPA: Response received, only correspondence with regard to EPA licence application need to be referred to the EPA. .

Eastern Regional Fisheries: No report on file or Pc-Doc.

Objections/Representations

None to date.

Relevant Planning History

QY/53: The sand and gravel pit was registered in accordance with Section 261 of the Planning and Development Act 2000. (in order to complete the registration of this sand and gravel pit a planning application was requested to be submitted with an accompanying EIS)

Pre Planning

A pre-planning meeting took place with the applicants on the 16/08/06. The main issues discussed were soil grading, the need for an EIS, submit details of loads, car parking and traffic counts and the need for a wheel wash.

Policy Context

In the consideration of this application and accompanying Environmental Impact Statement, the following policy and guidance notes have been referred to;

- Guidelines on Information to be Contained in Environmental Impact Statements (EPA 2002)
- Advise Notes on Current Practice in the preparation of Environmental Impact Statements (EPA 2003)
- Environmental Management in the Extractive Industry (Non – Scheduled Minerals) – Environmental Management Guidelines (DRAFT), (EPA, 2003)
- Quarries and Ancillary Activities – Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG, 2004).
- Landscape Assessment Guidelines (DRAFT), DEHLG.

Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area

Recommendation 10.2 notes that *“the supply of aggregates has been identified as a potential bottleneck to the provision of the required number of housing units and other developments in the GDA”*

Kildare County Development Plan 2005 – 2011

The current Kildare County Development Plan sets out specific policies regarding minerals extraction in addition to wider policies relating to heritage, landscape etc which are relevant to this application.

Extractive Industries

Policies regarding minerals are set out in Chapter 6 “Extractive Industries”. The Plan recognises the economic and social importance of the extractive industries in providing construction materials and jobs. It is further recognised that aggregates may only be worked where they occur and that such activities can have the potential to harm the environment and landscape, and impact on amenities. The overall goal is stated as being;

“to ensure that adequate supplies of aggregates are available to meet needs of the County and Region, in line with the principles of sustainable development and environmental management”.

Following on from this two objectives are set out relating to adequate supplies and minimisation of visual/ environmental impacts (Objectives 14.3 (1 & 2). Further advise is provided in relation to the layout and operation of such developments.

A number of “policy statements” being EI 1 to EI 11 are also listed and include;

14.8.0 Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Council:

EI 1 To carry out a survey and examination of both existing pit areas and potential sand and gravel deposits in the county, subject to the financial resources of the county. It is intended that this survey will be carried out in conjunction with the

CPI 18/1

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL PLANNING DEPARTMENT



Planning Report

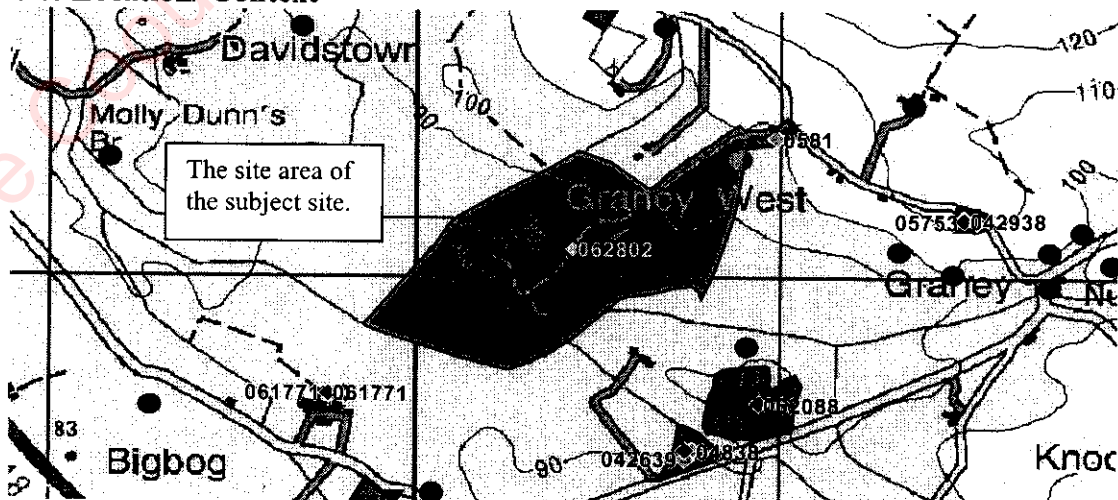
Planning Ref No. 06/2802

Name of Applicant	Sancom Ltd.
Address of Development	Graney West, Castledermot, Co. Kildare.
Type of Development	Continued operation of sand and gravel pit.
Type of Permission:	Permission
Date inspected:	15th February 2007
Due Date	18th January 2008

Description of Proposed Development

Permission is sought for the continued operation for the extraction of sand and gravel and all associated processing works including 3 no of mobile screening and washing units, 1 no batching house and conveyors, 2 no cement towers banded storage areas for concrete additive and fuels, settlement lagoons, the construction of new wheel wash, car parking area, 1 no. portacabin, and all other associated operational works. The application also includes the provision of all onsite development works, including topsoil/overburden storage areas and screening berms onsite. The application is sought for a period of 15 years. The total area of the site is 21.6ha.

Site Location/ Context



Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) and that it will assess the interactions between the development of these resources and future land uses.

EI 2 To safeguard resources by seeking to prevent incompatible land uses, that could be located elsewhere, from being located in the vicinity of the resource, since the extraction of minerals and aggregates is resource based and it is the policy of the Council

EI 3 To require that applicants demonstrate their commitment to good environmental management.

EI 4 To ensure that the full cost of road improvements which are necessary for this industry, shall be borne by the industry itself and that the industry shall also contribute to the recreation and amenity in the county.

EI 5 To ensure that the extractive industry minimise adverse effects on the road network in the area and contribute to their maintenance in accordance with Policy EI 4.

EI 6 To ensure that the extraction of minerals and aggregates should minimise the detraction from the visual quality of the landscape.

EI 7 To ensure that all existing workings shall be rehabilitated to suitable land uses and that all future extraction activities will allow for the rehabilitation of pits and proper land use management. The use of land filling with inert material is the preferred method, however, each planning application in relation to extractive industries shall be considered on a case by case basis and where relevant will be dealt with under the Waste Management Strategy.

EI 8 To prohibit extraction in areas classified as having Class A soils, except where it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative sites. The Council will only consider such extraction if it can be demonstrated that the land can be returned to similar agricultural use following cessation of extraction activities. Any extraction in areas with Class A soils must be carried out under the guidance of a soil specialist.

EI 9 To ensure that development for aggregates/mineral extraction, processing and associated concrete production does not significantly impact in the following areas:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs),
- Special Protection Areas (SPAs),
- Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs),
- Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna,
- Areas of significant archaeological potential,
- In the vicinity of a recorded monument, and
- Sensitive landscape as identified in section 18.

EI 10 To consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) in regard to any developments likely to have an impact on County Geological Sites listed in volume 2 of the Plan.

EI 11 To take particular cognisance of the likely effects that any proposed extractive industry may have on the existing landscape and amenities of the East Kildare Uplands Area.

The existing pit and proposed extension are located in the Eastern Transition. Having visited the proposed development lands it would appear that the proposed site reflects the characteristic of the Eastern Transition based on the descriptions and uses provided in the Plan.

Summary of Key Planning Issues and Assessment

An assessment of the EIS has been carried out.

Section 1-2 of the EIS is an Introduction and Description of the Site and Existing Environment. The EIS is accompanied by a non – technical summary. The NTS is not a separate document as advised by the EPA Guidelines.

Section 3 provides a detailed description of the development

This has been outlined above. I note the following;

- This application is for a temporary period of maximum 15 years.
- The extraction rate is 50,000 –75,000 tonnes per year, extraction rates will not change as a result of this application.
- The current hours of operation are 06.30 to 20.00 Monday to Friday and 08.00 to 16.00 Saturdays.
- No crushing or blasting is proposed.
- The average HGV trips per day are 20 and are not proposed to increase.
- Phased excavation plan is proposed, 3 main phases are indicated, Zone A which is current extraction area, it is then proposed to move to Zone B which is the field located to the northeast of the site. Following this extraction of Zone C will commence to the southwest of the site, a buffer zone of 10m from the river bank will be maintained. In areas that are exhausted, restoration will commence. It is noted no time frame have been given.
- Restoration of the site will commence alongside ongoing extraction work. The main objective of restoration are, to return the site to a satisfactory state, ensure safety on the site, and remove the risk of environmental pollution and ensure the site does not have a negative visual impact. It is proposed to restore the lands to agricultural use. Topsoil and overburden are currently being maintained on the site. Sancom are currently growing rapeseed at another site, and this will be planted on these lands once resorted. The existing site is bounding trees and vegetation, which will be retained.

Sections 4 to 13 consider the impact of the proposed development under a variety of headings.

The following is a summary of same.

Human Beings – Section 4

Issues relating to human beings are generally dealt with under the various headings of the potential impacts such as noise, air quality, water quality etc each of these are discussed in more detail under each chapter. There are 4 dwelling units within 500m of the site boundary. There is one dwelling unit within the quarry, which is occupied by family members of Sancom. A positive direct impact of the proposed development is the maintenance of employment. The mitigation measures proposed are as follows, the best safety practice shall be applied, fenced and enclosed site, screening is provided by hedgerows from nearest dwellings, consultation with locals is considered important and it is not likely to have a significant affect on human beings.

Flora & Fauna – Section 5

The site is not designated as a pNHA, pSAC. A habitats Survey was carried out the flora study concluded that 6 habitats were encompassed within the site boundary. The impacts are the increase in weeds and an inevitable consequence of quarrying is the loss of habitat. The mitigating measures as listed such, soil recovery, berms, buffer zone of 10m from Graney river, no works with regard to hedgerow trees etc during

nesting season, pit phases by Sand Martins will not be disturbed and progressive phased restoration. Having regard to the type of flora and fauna in the area, none of which is considered to be of great importance, with the mitigation measures imposed, it is considered that the development should not cause any significant impact on the flora and fauna.

The Heritage Officer has requested further information with regard to the restoration plan.

Soils & Geology – Section 6

The soil is generally grey brown podzolic. In this regard I note the policies within the Development Plan regarding extraction under Class A soils. The applicant has not indicated the Class type of the soil. I recommend that the applicant be requested to submit details of the soil class. The mitigation measures are the overburden removed will be separated into topsoil and subsoil and stored in banks around the edge of the quarry to reduce visual impact.

The topographical survey carried out was not considered to be adequate.

Water Quality– Section 7

This chapter is divided into different section.

- Surface water drainage, the potential impacts for this would be suspended solids laden run off, this could impact on the Graney River, which runs along the southern section of the site. The site operates a closed water circuit on site, all surface run off and wash water is directed to the lagoons and the recycling of water would be considered to offset the potential; impacts.
- Potential impacts to groundwater due to the removal of topsoil, overburden and aggregates and storage on fuel on site may affect ground water quality, provisions are made for storage of fuels, oils and greases run off from machinery will be directed away from water courses.
- Potential impacts and mitigating measures to domestic effluent provisions are suggested such as maintenance of the septic tank, percolation area and the pipe distribution system.
- There are no potential impacts and therefore no mitigating measures for potable water.

Air and Climatic – Section 8

The air quality at the nearest monitoring points are in Carlow and Naas and the air quality is described as “good”. A dust deposition survey was carried out and on the site over 2 periods and the results indicated that the dust levels arising from the existing site activities in the vicinity of the nearest residents are currently below the recommended industry level. The main impacts for dust are visual impacts, coating and soiling of property, coating vegetation, contamination of soils, water pollution change in plant species composition, and loss of sensitive plant species. The mitigating measures to offset these impacts are as follows: spray down site, stockpiles and public roads with water during periods of dry weather, earth stripping or moving will not be carried out in dry weather, a proposed wheel wash as part of this application, enclosed vehicles, road sweeping and spraying and long term exposed surfaces will be vegetated to reduce dust. Provided the mitigation measures are put in

place it is considered that the development would not have significant effects on air quality.

Cultural Heritage – Section 9

A comprehensive archaeological survey was carried out as part of the EIS. There are a number of sites entered into the Record of Monuments and Places surrounding the subject site. There was an archaeological discovery in the 1950's in an exhausted part of the pit, there was evidence of archaeological activity since the Early Bronze Age and an Early Bronze Age cemetery of three graves has been investigated within a previously quarried part of the site. Monitoring the topsoil and subsoil by an archaeologist is recommended.

I note the DoEHLG has no objections to the proposal subject to conditions.

Landscape & Visual Amenity – Section 10

The applicant's have carried out a visual impact assessment. The assessment involved a desk study and photographic survey.

As noted above the site given its topography and characteristics appears to be located within the Eastern Transition Zone and as such views of the existing and proposed development are limited due to intervening topography and vegetation. All boundaries to the site are surrounded by agricultural lands the character of the area is rural with the large agricultural fields bounded by mature hedgerow, it is also noted that there are a number of other sites for extractive industry in the area. The site is not located within a designated pNHA, scenic route, view or prospect.

The visual impact is considered to be limited with a moderate medium term impact from a residential dwelling located <5m from the **northwestern** boundary of the site.

Views from the **county road** are also limited due to topography and vegetation, the visual impact is considered to be imperceptible medium term impact.

Views from a residential dwelling **south** of the quarry are limited due to vegetation and the visual impact is considered to be imperceptible medium term impact.

The mitigating measures proposed to reduce the visual impact of the extractive activities on the site are phasing work, a restoration scheme and landscaping, if these are carried out there it is anticipated there would be no significant long term visual impact.

It is considered that the visual impact assessment carried out was not carried out comprehensively, it is also noted the topographical survey is not considered to be adequate.

Roads & Traffic – Section 11

A Traffic Impact Assessment was carried out by BMA Transportation Services.

The county road at Graney West links up with Section 4015 and 4016 Secondary Road between Castledermot and Baltinglass and the trips move through the N9/Tullow intersection in Castledermot or joins the N81 south of Baltinglass. There are 20 HGV trips per day and 10 car trips per day. 60% of the HGV trips go to Castledermot 40% of the HGV trips go to Baltinglass. It is stated that few of these trips take place during peak periods.

The Local county road within the vicinity of the site is experiencing pressure from the volume of HGV utilising it, photographic evidence is provided. The site lines to the left of the access is at least 100m and to right 150m.

It is stated the development has already made significant contributions over the past 6 years to improve a number of roads within the area. It is stated that the development on the capacity of intersections in the vicinity is very low.

It is recommended the development contribute towards the rehabilitation of the county road between the site access and the secondary road R4105 and this contribution should be in the form of materials for this section of road.

I note the Road Department have requested further information.

Waste Generation and Management - Section 12

There will be no change to the waste types or disposal methods current in practice on the site. The potential impacts are inappropriate storage of hazardous waste, which can lead to pollution of subsoil's watercourses and ground water, prolonged period of storage, visual impact of storage and litter. The mitigating measures in this instance are all wastes will be separated and disposed of via an authorised waste contractor. Recycle packaging waste, reuse and recycle silt clay materials, only authorised contractors will be employed to deal with waste and securing site boundaries to negate against illegal dumping. If the waste management of the site continues as it is presently then it is considered there will be no significant impact.

Noise and Vibration – Section 13

There is no blasting on site or proposed in this application. The noise is generated on site by removal of topsoil and overburden, excavation with machinery, grading and screening sand and gravel on site, transportation within and off site

A survey of the existing noise levels on the site was carried out the survey took place during normal working hours at 3 noise sensitive location NSL (1 dwelling north of the site and 2 dwellings south of the site). The noise levels recorded were 43.3dB(A) and 68.5dB (A), the recognised standard of **55dBA**. NSL 3 had the highest level of noise due to its location along the Regional road, it is stated the main noise source at this location is traffic along this route.

The mitigation measures suggested are restricting the vehicle movements on the site form 08.00-18.00 Mon-Fri and 09.30-16.00 Sat.

Additional mounds will be crested due to the phasing of the quarry, this will provide acoustic measures aswell as screening measures. A buffer zone of 10m along the boundary to the southwest is proposed. Maintain machinery, which is essential to reduction in noise levels. It is not anticipated that the continued operation of the sand and gravel pit will give rise to a noise nuisance in the locality.

I do not consider that the Environmental Impact Statement has adequately assessed the cumulative impact of the development as required under Schedule 6 (2)(c) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 as amended.

From the preliminary assessment of the documents, it is evident that the applicant has to provide further information particularly relating to the cumulative impact of the proposed development on the area, visibility of the proposal through the 3 identified phases, duration of the identified phases of development, restoration proposals, detailed explanation as to how the development is considered to comply with the provisions of Chapter 14 of the County Development Plan, 2005 – 2011, adequate visual impact assessment and topographical survey, land registry details and details of the soil class. The operational hours of the sand and gravel pit are considered to be

excessive, revised operational hour shall be recommended and the revised EIS should have regard to same.

Thus, having regard to the foregoing I consider that to adequately assess this application the applicant should be requested to submit FI as outlined below.

It was recommended that **further information** be requested, the following was sought and the response is as follows:

1. The Planning Authority recognise the demand for quarrying materials to facilitate local and regional growth and the constraints regarding their location, it is considered that the scale of development proposed and the timeframe for same is excessive and therefore unacceptable in the current format. Having regard to "*Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*" and the culmination of issues identified in this request for further information, the applicant is required to submit revised proposals for sand and gravel extraction, not exceeding ten years in duration. The applicant shall submit full details (including clear and detailed associated mapping) of a Phasing Plan, which shall be provided on a 3-year basis. This Plan shall include amendments to the nature and extent of the development to reflect same.

Response: A revised phasing plan for 10 years has been submitted.

The plan indicates phase 1 as extraction in the central area of the quarry where extraction is currently taking place will continue for the next 3 years. The rate of extraction will be approximately 50,000 – 70, 000 tonnes per annum for the next 3 years. Any condition that is attached will be completed at this phase.

Phase 2 includes restoration of central (phase 1) area and extraction in the eastern phase 2 area from years 4-6. The rate of extraction will be approximately 50,000 – 70, 000 tonnes per annum for the next 3 years

Phase 3 comprises of restoration of eastern (phase 2) area this will be full restoration of phase 2 area and completion of any restoration required in phase 1.

Phase 3, year 10 is final closure.

The nature of extraction remains unchanged and the extent of the extraction has been reduced to 2 phase areas. Following testing it was found that the sand and gravel in the field closest to the Graney River was not economically viable for extraction. There is no extraction proposed in the northern field closest to the road.

2. Given the scale of the existing quarrying works on the site, the Planning Authority has serious concerns regarding the extent of restoration proposed by the applicant. In this regard, the applicant is requested to submit a progressive Restoration Plan for the site, which shall include full drawings and detailed documentation as follows:

- A contour map with spot levels of the site.
- **A series of cross sections** for each of the following: (1) Existing ground levels and gradients (2) Proposed ground levels and gradients (3) Restoration ground levels and gradients. These levels shall extend beyond the boundaries of the site, clearly demonstrating the relationship of the proposed finished landform to the adjoining property/site levels.
- Full details of proposed planting and landscaping (planting plan and schedule)
- Full details of safety & security measures
- Full details of potential future land uses (e.g. agriculture).

The Restoration Plan shall correlate to the Phasing Plan proposed in response to item no. 1 above. Phase 1 of the development shall relate to restoration of previously worked areas. Phase 2 shall relate to the current production area and Phase 3 shall relate to the future production area.

Response: A landscaping and restoration plan has been included contours and spot heights have been indicated. The eastern section of the site (which will not be subject to extraction) is the highest point on the site 97m, the level of the site dips to 81m to the southwesterly corner.

These levels shall extend beyond the boundaries of the site, clearly demonstrating the relationship of the proposed finished landform to the adjoining property/site levels.

Full details of proposed planting and landscaping have been submitted.

The proposed new land use will be agricultural of which grass will be grown on the site as it will be the most suitable agricultural option given that it is a relatively easy crop to grown.

The subject site is fenced and defining will not be removed, entrance to the quarry will be restricted during times when the pout is closed, boundary hedging to be maintained, no lagoons to remain as part of final closure. Sancom operates in accordance with a Safety Statement and H&S legislation and the HSA.

3. In conjunction with item no. 2 above, it is unclear from the information submitted on file whether the material on site is sufficient in itself to ensure restoration of the site, or whether imported materials will be required to facilitate same. In the event that it is proposed to import materials, please address the following;

- The point of origin of all materials to be used in the identified works
- A map showing all "haul routes" of the material to be delivered to the site
- The quantity of materials to be brought to the site
- The anticipated vehicular movements necessary per day

Response:

The point of origin of all materials to be used will be construction works in Castledermot and Ballinglass.

Inert materials such as topsoil and subsoil will be imported to restore the site, a map illustrating the location of the site in relation to Ballinglass and Castledermot.

Approximately 200,000 cubic metres of inert material will be needed to complete the restoration of the quarry. The density of these materials will be 2.1 cubic metres therefore 421,000 tonnes of material will be needed over the next 10 years.

Over the lifetime of the quarry 21,050 HGV's will be needed over 10 years to deliver topsoil and subsoil. Over 10 years it is estimated that an additional 7 truck movements will be needed per day.

4. The Planning Authority has concerns regarding the proposed operational hours as detailed in the EIS submitted. Section 4.7 of the DoEHLG publication "*Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*", Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2004, outlines the suggested hours of operation. The applicant is requested to submit revised proposed operational hours to comply with same.

Response: In accordance with same the hours of operation have been amended to 07.00-18.00 Monday to Friday (excluding bank Holidays) and between 07.00-14.00 on Saturdays, no processing or associated works will be allowed on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Occasionally emergency maintenance may be carried out from 14.00-16.00 on Saturday only in the emergency circumstances.

5. You are requested to assess the environmental impacts arising from the development in conjunction with existing and all other proposed development in the area.

Response: The site is surrounded by agricultural activities and associated buildings, some one off housing and extractive industry. The nearest commercial activity is located 3km from the application site. Several of the one off houses in the area were recently granted permission. Within the last year and half a planning application was lodged for a one off dwelling it was refused by KCC and is currently being appealed. This site is located 1km from the subject site. A planning application was recently lodged for a care facility for elderly people, which is located 1.5km from the subject site. This application is currently on further information. The known environmental impacts associated with the extraction industry area noise, dust, impact on water supply, traffic impact and visual impact.

Noise and Dust Generation:

The environmental impacts taken in conjunction with the residential and commercial developments in the area will not increase the dust and noise generated from the site. The following mitigation measures are proposed:

Covering or spraying of fine loads before exiting the site and cleaning of roads if necessary.

Maintenance of machinery on site.

Landscaped mounds to eastern boundary of the site.

Main entrance to the quarry is graded.

During dry weather the main entrance and public roads adjacent to the quarry will be sprayed with water.

Stock piles are sprayed.

Earth stripping or moving will not be carried out in periods of dry weather.

Wheel washing bay.

Road sweeping and spraying down of the internal route.

Long term exposed surfaces will be seeded.

The operation of the extraction process and equipment at levels deeper than ground level abates noise levels at noise sensitive locations.

Restrictive operational hours.

Traffic movements are limited within the site to the designated internal road layout.

Earth mounds proposed as part of phase 2 will provide acoustic and visual screening.

No extraction is proposed in the north field or the field directly adjacent to the River Graney.

Regular maintenance of machinery.

Noise monitoring will be carried out at noise sensitive locations.

Visual Impact:

The visual impact of the proposed development in conjunction with the residential dwellings does not increase the impact significantly. The progressive restoration and additional landscaping of this pit will mitigate the visual impact. The following measure will be taken:

Planting of native tree species on the eastern boundary.

Restoration of the pit throughout the phasing process to agricultural lands.

Hedgerows will be maintained and restored.

The reduction of the extraction to 2 areas only.

Water Supply:

The extraction pit is not below the water table level therefore no impact is anticipated.

Traffic Impact:

The output of the sand and gravel put is not going to increase as a result of this application and the current traffic levels associated with the existing pit will remain. The increase in car movements may increase due to one off housing however this is considered to be insignificant.

Environmental Impact in conjunction with agricultural area:

The pit currently is not considered to have a significant impact on agriculture in the area. This pit has been in operation for over 60 years. The pit will return to agricultural use once extraction has ceased.

Environmental Impact in conjunction with other extractive industry in the area:

This is dealt with in point 18.

6. Please state how the proposed development would comply with **best practice mitigation measures** set out in Chapter 3 of the DoEHLG publication "*Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*", Guidelines for Planning Authorities, April 2004. The applicant is requested to submit full details (including associated maps & drawings) of all mitigation measures that will be implemented on the site. (i.e. buffer zones, paving of roads, sound reduction equipment fitted to machinery, acoustic screening, etc.). The applicant shall submit a separate report outlining all mitigation measures which will be implemented on site.

Response: A summary of mitigation measures has been proposed they are dealt with under different headings.

Cultural Heritage:

An archaeological assessment was carried out. There was one protected structure within the study area, which is B40-05 Two Earthworks and graveyard, the structure is outside the application area and will not be affected by the development. The cemetery was investigated between April and September 1953. Due to the possibility of other sub-surface archaeological deposits or finds in the site, topsoil stripping within the development area will be archaeologically monitored when extraction moves to phase 2.

Noise:

Vehicle movements and extraction area restricted to the following hours, 07.00-18.00 Monday to Friday (excluding bank Holidays) and between 07.00-14.00 on Saturdays, no processing or associated works will be allowed on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Traffic movements are limited within the site to the designated internal road layout. Earth mounds proposed as part of phase 2 will provide acoustic and visual screening. No extraction is proposed in the north field or the field directly adjacent to the River Graney. Regular maintenance of machinery. Noise monitoring will be carried out at noise sensitive locations, noise reports will be made available for KCC.

Ecological Impact-Flora and Fauna:

An ecological study was carried out on site and it was noted that there was a number of differing habitats found. The mitigation measures are as follows, phased restoration will allow the site to return to agricultural use, soil recovery will be maximised, berms will be seeded, ongoing monitoring to ensure emission levels are not exceeded, no removal of hedgerows. Pit facers used by Sand martins will not be disturbed during the summer months while the birds are present. Some vertical slopes will remain with little vegetation to provide for habitats for Sand Martins.

Soils and Geology:

Overburden removal during phase 2 of the sand and gravel will be divided in top soil and sub soil and will be stored in banks around the site to reduce visual, noise and dust impact. This spoil will then be used during phase 3 in the restoration to restore the excavation area in phase 2. Fuel-refuelling activities are all supervised, all fuels area properly stored, a direct haul route to the storage areas is provided and spill kits area also provided

Dust:

Covering or spraying of fine loads before existing the site and cleaning of roads if necessary.

Maintenance of machinery on site.

Landscaped mounds to eastern boundary of the site.

Main entrance to the quarry is graded.

During dry weather the main entrance and public roads adjacent to the quarry will be sprayed with water.

Stock piles are sprayed.

Earth stripping or moving will not be carried out in periods of dry weather.

Wheel washing bay.

Road sweeping and spraying down of the internal route.

Long term exposed surfaces will be seeded.

Restoration and retention of existing trees and shrubbery:

Existing hedgerows will be maintained and reinforced where necessary. Planting of tree groves along the eastern boundary, yard area and access road is proposed in the landscaping plan.

Water quality:

Fuels stored on site shall be banded, spill kits shall be on site. Refuelling from on site fuel tanks, concrete hardstanding areas with all drainage directed through oil water receptor. Uncontained wheel wash run off, wheel wash is to be designed so that it is topped up with recycled water and redirected to oil water receptor. Percolation area will be inspected periodically. The septic tank will be dislodged every 6 months.

Waste Management on site:

All wastes on site will be separated and disposed of via an authorised waste contractor. All packaging waste will be sent for recycling. Silt clay materials from the settlement ponds will be re-used and recycled as part of the rehabilitation of the site. Securing site boundaries ensures the illegal fly tipping and disposal of wastes by third parties.

A comparison of the mitigation measures with the best practice mitigation measures set out in Chapter 3 of the DoEHLG publication "*Quarries and Ancillary Activities: Guidelines for Planning Authorities*" is also included.

7. Please state how the proposed development would comply with **all policies** as set out in the Chapter 14 'Extractive Industries' of the Kildare County Development Plan 2005-2011.

Response:

EI 1 To carry out a survey and examination of both existing pit areas and potential sand and gravel deposits in the county, subject to the financial resources of the county. It is intended that this survey will be carried out in conjunction with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) and that it will assess the interactions between the development of these resources and future land uses.

EI 2 To safeguard resources by seeking to prevent incompatible land uses, that could be located elsewhere, from being located in the vicinity of the resource, since the extraction of minerals and aggregates is resource based.

It should be noted that the application site is an existing sand and gravel pit registered under Section 261 of the Planning and development Act 2000 and therefore of know aggregate quality.

EI 3 To require that applicants demonstrate their commitment to good environmental management.

The operation of the quarry over the past number of decades indicated good environmental practices on site. All wastes on site will be disposed off via authorized waste contractors, all fuels on site will be stored in bunded areas. There has been no significant incident on site, which has caused environmental pollution. The applicants comply with Section 261 legislation. The operator is committed to put in place and Environmental Management System.

EI 4 To ensure that the full cost of road improvements which are necessary for this industry, shall be borne by the industry itself and that the industry shall also contribute to the recreation and amenity of the county.

Sancom has provided contribution in the past for maintenance of the roads in the area to KCC.

EI 5 To ensure that the extractive industry minimises adverse effects on the road network in the area and contributes to their maintenance in accordance with Policy EI 4.

The applicants in the past has contributed towards the upgrading of the local roads in the areas in conjunction with the roads engineers. A wheel wash has been proposed within the application. Sancom will ensure that all local roads are kept clean and not cause any nuisance to local road users.

EI 6 To ensure that the extraction of minerals and aggregates should minimise the detracton from the visual quality of the landscape.

Given the undulating character of the area the gravel pit is effectively disguised in the rolling landscape. Hedgerow bound the surrounding fields providing natural screening. Unused areas of the site have naturally re-vegetated. The site is has very limited visible along the Baltinglass to Castledermot road and is not visible from Graney West bridge. Only approaching the pit on local roads does it become visible from the north, therefore planting along this section is proposed to reduce the impact. The restoration scheme will be progressive, included the planting of native species, existing topsoil and sub soil.

EI 7 To ensure that all existing workings be rehabilitated to suitable land uses and that all future extraction activities allow for the rehabilitation of pits and proper land use management. Land filling with inert material is the preferred method, however, each planning application in relation to extractive industries shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and, where relevant, will be dealt with under the Waste Management Strategy.

A revised restoration plan, and a landscaping and planting scheme are included additionally extraction will not take place in the northern or southern field. Topsoil and sub spoil will be stored on site and will be used to rehabilitate and fill extraction areas.

EI 8 To prohibit extraction in areas classified as having Class A soils, except where it can be demonstrated that there are no suitable alternative sites. The Council will only consider such extraction if it can be demonstrated that the land can be returned to a

similar agricultural use following cessation of extraction activities. Any extraction in areas with Class A soils must be carried out under the guidance of a soil specialist.

A review of the soil was carried out by Golders Associates and it was determined that the site is not located in an area of Class A soils. The soils in the area Type B1. There are 4 hectares of land adjacent to the public, which would be classified as Class A2. These lands are presently tillage. Golders recommends a soil specialist be consulted for supervision of any extraction and stripping.

EI 9 To ensure that development for aggregates/mineral extraction, processing and associated concrete production does not significantly impact in the following areas:

- *Special Areas of Conservation (SACs),*
- *Special Protection Areas (SPAs),*
- *Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs),*
- *Other areas of importance for the conservation of flora and fauna,*
- *Areas of significant archaeological potential,*
- *In the vicinity of a recorded monument, and*
- *Sensitive landscapes as identified in chapter 18, volume two.*

The site does not include any SAC, SPA or NHA. A number of mitigation measures with regard to sand martins archaeological monitoring and maintenance of existing hedgerows etc have been included the application.

EI 10 To consult with the Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI) with regard to any developments likely to have an impact on County Geological Sites listed in volume 2 of the Plan.

There are no geological sites as listed in Volume 2 of the development plan.

EI 11 To take particular cognisance of the likely effects that any proposed extractive industry may have on the existing landscape and amenities of the East Kildare Uplands Area.

The site is located in South East Kildare and does not form part of the designated eastern uplands area.

8. Please submit a revised site location map clearly indicating the location of all existing and permitted dwellings and community facilities within a 1km radius of the site boundaries.

Response: A revised site location map has been submitted.

9. Please submit full details of an Environmental Management system proposed for the site.

Response: The EMS proposed by Sancom includes the following:

Environmental Policy Statement, this will be signed by both directors and communicated to all employees and subcontractors, it will provide a framework for the commitment for environmental responsibility on the site.

Environmental Monitoring Programme, this will be done on an annual basis, and will contain a list of environmental improvement objectives.

Environmental Monitoring Programme, noise, dust, mound annual noise and annual surface water monitoring along with another conditions attached as part of permission.

Annual Environmental Report, this will summarise environmental monitoring and will be made available for inspection.

Register of legislation and other requirements applicable to the site will be documented a list of legislation and codes of practice are submitted.

Operating Procedure as implemented by the EMS will be carried out on site, which includes inspecting bunds, storage of waste, storage of raw materials, fencing boundaries etc. Documentation /logs will form part of EMS.

10. The applicant is requested to submit a full and detailed landscaping plan and planting schedule for the complete site, which shall be prepared by a suitably qualified Landscaping Architect. The landscape plan shall include full details of the following: Buffer zones, existing and proposed boundary treatments, planting schedule, full details of the and density of planting proposed and appropriate cross sections to indicate the intended landscaping works.

Response: A landscaping plan has been submitted.

11. The Planning Authority has concerns regarding the potential negative impact of the proposed development on the existing private wells in the vicinity of the site. The applicant is requested to submit a full report prepared by a suitably qualified professional that fully assess the potential impact of the proposed development on all adjoining private wells and full details of any subsequent mitigation measures required.

Response: A report was carried out by Golders Associates which found that the majority of the dwellings in the area were using mains water however the nearest dwelling located to the quarry had a private well which was 50m north of the quarry site boundary. Given the nature of extractive industry there is potential for groundwater contamination. Potential risks are identified and mitigation measures are given. Such as fuels stored on site shall be bunded, spill kits shall be on site. Refuelling from on site fuel tanks, concrete hardstanding areas with all drainage directed through oil water receptor. Uncontained wheel wash run off, wheel wash is to be designed so that it is topped up with recycled water and redirected to oil water receptor.

12. Notwithstanding the mitigation measures contained in the Environmental Impact Statement, it is considered that the potential visual implications of the development, intermittent or otherwise, have not been adequately demonstrated. Concern is directed at the visual impact of the proposed development on the adjoining residents and the adjacent roads. Under the Development Impact – Landscape Sensitivity Matrix perception of Landscape Impacts in the County Development Plan 2005 – 2011, it is noteworthy that the Extractive Industry has a perception of visual/ landscape impact rating as ‘High’ and the sensitivity of the South Eastern Uplands area is ‘High’. The landscape and visual impact assessment submitted, as part of the EIS does not appear to have comprehensively addressed the extent of development proposed.

Please indicate how it is proposed to address these issues and submit revised proposals accordingly. The revised proposals should include significant use of photomontages from appropriate vantage points on all boundaries of the site, from nearby residential properties and in the wider vicinity of the site to help indicate the potential impact of the proposed development. Cross sections of the site shall also be required, demonstrating the relationship of adjacent dwellings and school to the proposed development (including ffl).

Response: A revised restoration plan, and a landscaping plan are included additionally extraction will not take place in the northern or southern field.

Given the undulating character of the area the gravel pit is effectively disguised in the rolling landscape. Hedgerow bound the surrounding fields providing natural screening. Unused areas of the site have naturally re-vegetated. The site is very limited visible along the Baltinglass to Castledermot road and is not visible from Graney West bridge. Only approaching the pit on local roads does it become visible from the north, therefore planting along this section is proposed to reduce the impact. The restoration scheme will be progressive, included the planting of native species, existing topsoil and sub soil. It is considered that in this Eastern Uplands area that the capacity of the area to visually absorb is influenced by a combination of topography, vegetation, visibility and development. The core objective of the landscaping plan is compatibility with the surrounding landscape.

13. Given the inadequate number and position of dust monitoring stations, the applicants are requested to carry out a revised round of monitoring including locations adjoining public roads and the perimeter of the site. On the basis of the above, predicted dust levels at these locations should be recalculated and submitted to the local authority.

Response: Additional dust monitoring was carried out in September and October 2007. Monitoring periods were. 12/10/05, 08/06, 04/07/07, 13/10/07, the areas monitored were eastern boundary, south-eastern boundary, western boundary and the access road. One result exceeded the recommended limit value which was recorded on the 13/10/07 at the access road. It is proposed as part of this application to install a wheel wash at the site. A number of mitigation measures have been indicated such as

- Covering or spraying of fine loads before exiting the site and cleaning of roads if necessary.
- Maintenance of machinery on site.
- Landscaped mounds to eastern boundary of the site.
- Main entrance to the quarry is graded.
- During dry weather the main entrance and public roads adjacent to the quarry will be sprayed with water.
- Stock piles are sprayed.
- Earth stripping or moving will not be carried out in periods of dry weather.
- Wheel washing bay.
- Road sweeping and spraying down of the internal route.
- Long term exposed surfaces will be seeded.

14. The applicant is requested to submit details relating to indirect employment from the quarry, assess the potential impact of same and include appropriate mitigation measures.

Response: Suppliers of fuels and raw materials and maintenance personnel. Delivery of fuels on site is approximately twice weekly. Mitigation measures as part of these deliveries are as follows, fuel-refuelling activities are all supervised, a direct haul route to the storage areas is provided and spill kits area also provided. Maintenance personnel, all maintenance of plant and machinery is carried out on site, all waste from maintenance area sent off site by authorised waste contractors. It is considered that the environmental impacts associated with indirect employment are insignificant in this instance.

15. The applicant is advised that the submitted topography map is inadequate. In this regard, the applicant is requested to provide a detail site layout map on an A0 sheet including contour lines at 5m intervals, the finished working level of extracted areas and the adjoining roads.

Response: A topographical survey has been submitted.

16. The applicant is requested to submit the location of the groundwater intersection which indicated the level at approximately 7m below including Ordnance Datum showing the level at which groundwater was encountered.

Response: A cross section through the site illustrates the ground water level. The apparent groundwater intersection lies between 0-9m below the current ground level. This ground level is likely to be seasonal and it should be noted that the period of June – July 2007 has been one of the wettest on record. It should also be noted that the quarry operator does not intend to excavate below the ground water level.

17. Please outline the proposed finished working level for the area identified as 'Future Working Area'.

Response: The proposed finished working area in the future will be 81-82.5 OD.

18. The Planning Authority does not consider that the Environmental Impact Statement has adequately assessed the cumulative impact of the proposed development as required under Schedule 6(2)(c) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 as amended. Thus having regard to the number of extractive developments in the immediate vicinity please submit a revised Environmental Impact Statement, which shall be in full compliance with Schedule 6(2)(c) of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001 as amended. In this regard, the items of this further information request shall be incorporated in the revised the Environmental Impact Statement.

Response: This section considered that environmental impacts of the application in the context of all other operational quarried in a 5km radius of the site.

There are 5 other operating quarries within a 5km radius of the area, two of which are also operated by Sancom.

07/858, Broadstown, Keatley concrete 5km from site awaiting decision.

05/2091, Dan Morrissey Sand and Gravel Ballyburn Upper 5km from site. Permission granted with conditions.

05/586 John Germaine, Knockroe 2 km from site. Permission granted with conditions.

06/2803, Sancom Big stone 4.5km from site, awaiting decision.

06/2088, Sancom Colstown, 1.5km from site this planning application was recently withdrawn.

The cumulative impacts of same are addressed under different headings.

Cultural Heritage:

An archaeological assessment was carried out. There was one protected structure within the study area, which is B40-05 Two Earthworks and graveyard, the structure is outside the application area and will not be affected by the development. The cemetery was investigated between April and September 1953. Due to the possibility of other sub-surface archaeological deposits or finds in the site, topsoil stripping within the development area will be archeologically monitored when extraction moves to phase 2. With this mitigation measure proposed this operation will not have an impact on cultural heritage in the area and will not contribute to any cumulative impact.

Water Quality:

Surface water monitoring was undertaken downstream of the pit. All parameters analysed for were within recommended industry standards. A surface water treatment is in place which ensures surface water is not impacted upon by the operations of the facility. The surface water management was reviewed as part of the assessment and was found to be adequate. If activities undertaken in the surrounding area are followed then it is expected that the impacts on the Graney West area will not contribute to a cumulative impacts on the water quality in the area.

Ecology (Flora and Fauna):

Following an ecological study the following habitats were found, improved agricultural grasslands, active quarries and mines, tilled land, hedgerows depositing/lowland rivers. The habitats bordering and within the application site are common and not of any conservation to note. None of the habitats found correspond directly with Annex 1 of the EU Habitats Directive. None of the floras found are included in the Floral Protection Order S.I No. 94 of 1999. A colony of sand martins are nesting on the site and as part of the restoration of the quarry a section of quarry face will remain exposed to allow the sand martins to continue nesting. It is considered that the application site in conjunction with the other extractive industries in the area will not contribute to a cumulative impact on the flora and fauna in the area.

Soils and Geology:

A review of the soil was carried out by Golders Associates and it was determined that the site is not located in an area of Class A soils. Soils in the vicinity of the site have been classified as Type B1 (suitable to moderately suitable for tillage) and D1 (poorly suitable for tillage). The continued operation of the pit is not considered to pose any impact on the spoils with the site therefore it cannot contribute to any cumulative impacts on the region.

Air and Climate:

The EIS identified dust as the principal air emission associated with the application site. 8 dust monitoring results were analysed and only one exceeded the recommended limit. This was located at the access road to the pit. No other vehicles other than those bringing material from the pit contributed to this elevated level. The following mitigation measures are proposed.

Covering or spraying of fine loads before exiting the site and cleaning of roads if necessary.

Maintenance of machinery on site.

Landscaped mounds to eastern boundary of the site.

Main entrance to the quarry is graded.

During dry weather the main entrance and public roads adjacent to the quarry will be sprayed with water.

Stock piles are sprayed.

Earth stripping or moving will not be carried out in periods of dry weather.

Wheel washing bay.

Road sweeping and spraying down of the internal route.

Long term exposed surfaces will be seeded.

Noise:

A noise survey was carried out as part of the EIS noise generated by other extractive industries in the region were not audible at the nearest noise sensitive locations, therefore noise generated by other extractive industries are not likely to combine with the subject site resulting in no cumulative impact.

Visual impact:

The visual impact of the application site is not increased by the presence of other quarries in the area. Only one pit visible from the boundary of the subject site. This is the sand and gravel pit at Coltstown. It is considered that the cumulative visual impact of the total number of quarries in operating within a 5km radius of the site is thought to be legible.

19. The applicant is requested to clarify the Class of soils on the site. In this regard the applicant's attention is drawn to the policies contained Chapter 14 of the Development Plan regarding extraction under Class A soils.

Response: A review of the soil was carried out by Golders Associates and it was determined that the site is not located in an area of Class A soils. The soils in the area are Type B1. There are 4 hectares of land adjacent to the public, which would be classified as Class A2. These lands are presently tillage. Golders recommends a soil specialist be consulted for supervision of any extraction and stripping.

20. Please submit all lands registry details including map and folios of the entire subject site.

Response: Land registry details have been submitted indicating the lands are in ownership of Stephen Hadziak since 1997.

Conclusion:

I note that favourable updated reports with conditions attached have been received by Water Service and the Heritage Officer. I note Environment and Roads are seeking clarification of further information.

It is considered that the applicants have sufficiently addressed a number of the further information issues however there is some details outstanding which needs clarification:

Additional cross sections are requested with regard to the restoration plan such as **A series of cross sections** for each of the following: (1) Existing ground levels and gradients (2) Proposed ground levels and gradients (3) Restoration ground levels and gradients. These levels shall extend beyond the boundaries of the site, clearly demonstrating the relationship of the proposed finished landform to the adjoining property/site levels.

Clarity is needed on what Emergency maintenance is which was mentioned might be required to be carried out on 14.00-16.00 Saturdays.

It is noted that from the maps submitted that a small area of Class A2 soil is located within the extraction site indicated for phase 2, clarification of same and extraction under Class A soils shall detailed that it is in accordance with Chapter 14 of the CPD.

Recommendation:

I recommend **clarification of further information** be requested:

1. Notwithstanding your response to item number 2 of the further information received on the 15/11/07, you are requested to submit a series of cross sections for each of the following: (1) Existing ground levels and gradients (2) Proposed ground levels and gradients (3) Restoration ground levels and gradients. These levels shall extend beyond the boundaries of the site, clearly demonstrating the relationship of the proposed finished landform to the adjoining property/site levels.

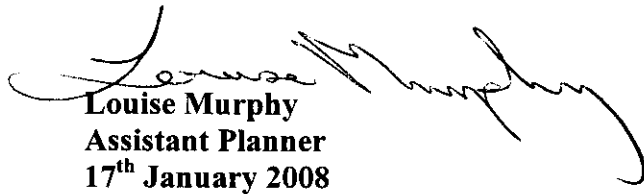
2. You are requested to clarify and detail what the term emergency maintenance entails which was stated within your response to item number 4 of further information received. Please clarify if this would require the use of any machinery on site.

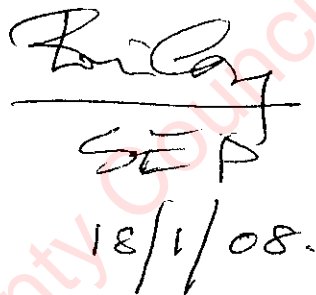
3. It was noted from your response to further information received that part of the Phase 2 extraction area appears to contain Class A soil. You are requested to clarify same and detail how the extraction of soil from this area would be in compliance with E1 8 of Chapter 14 of the County Development Plan.

Environment
Roads

A/O Planning Administration:

- Please do not send until the outstanding reports from Roads have been received to ascertain their requirements on the application.


Louise Murphy
Assistant Planner
17th January 2008


SEP
18/1/08.

Kildare County Council - Inspection Purposes Only