

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL CASTELL-NEDD PORT TALBOT**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
ASSESSMENT) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 1999**

**SCREENING OPINION – ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT NOT
REQUIRED**

Name and address of the applicant

**Marshall's Mono Limited
C/o Agent**

Name and address of the agent

**Karen Hearnshaw
Hearnshaw Planning
Chancery House
3 Hatchlands Road
Redhill
Surrey
RH1 6AA**

DATE REGISTERED: 4 September 2023

APPLICATION NO: P2023/0663

LOCATION: Gwrhyd Quarry, Gwrhyd Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA9 2SB

PROPOSAL: Request for a Screening Opinion under Regulation 6 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Wales) Regulations 2017 (EIA Regs), in connection with a proposal to seek changes to a planning consent for Gwrhyd Quarry, Gwrhyd Road, Pontardawe, SA9 2SB

THE NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL AS THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY IN PURSUANCE OF ITS POWER UNDER THE ABOVE MENTIONED ACT AND REGULATION HEREBY ADOPTS THE FOLLOWING SCREENING OPINION THAT THE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT AN E.I.A. DEVELOPMENT AND THAT THE APPLICATION NEED NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT. THE REASONS FOR THIS OPINION ARE SET OUT IN THE ATTACHED REPORT.

Signed:



Ceri Morris – Head of Planning & Public Protection

Date: 13 October 2023

Application No.:	P/2023/0663 SCR	
Site Location:	Gwrhyd Quarry, Rhiwfawr	
Description:	Screening opinion request for proposals at Gwrhyd quarry, The proposals is for a section 73 application to allow for a longer operational period at the site (the exact date is not confirmed in the information submitted) and to allow for minor changes to the existing highways conditions to alter the type of materials to leave the site. Tonnages leaving the site will not change but in altering the condition it is hoped to allow for the removal of what has historically been seen as 'waste' products (i.e. not dimension stone) but is actually material capable of being sold as aggregates (there would still be an element of 'waste' overburden/soil materials which would be retained on site). Much of this 'waste/aggregate' lies on top of the approved reserve of dimension stone. The applicant has made some progress in moving this material to allow access to the dimension stone reserve. However, there is still a large volume of this material to be removed so the applicant is applying to extend the lifetime of the site in order to allow time for the removal of this 'waste' and to allow extraction of the entire dimension stone reserve. In combination with the required changes to the exported materials and the lifetime of the site, there will also be minor amendments needed to phasing plans etc, to reflect the change in the way of working the site this would also be covered in any forthcoming application. There are no proposed changes to tonnages exported from the site or to working hours, lateral extent or depth of the quarry and operational matters would all continue as existing.	
Date of submission:	31/8/2023	
Relevant Regulation:	2017 Regs. Submitted on or after 16 May 2017.	
Schedule 1.		
Is the project Schedule 1 Development?		NO
Does the project change or extend development described in schedule 1?		NO
Schedule 2.		
Is the project listed as a description of development under column 1 of Schedule 2?	Yes – Schedule 2 (13b) (b) Any change to or extension of development of a description listed in paragraphs 1 to 12 of column 1 of this table, where that development is already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed	

Are the applicable thresholds/criteria in column 2 exceeded/met?	Yes	(a) The thresholds and criteria in the corresponding part of Column 2 of this table applied to the development as changed or extended are met or exceeded; and
Does the project change or extend development described in column 1 of schedule 2?	Yes	
Is the Project located wholly or partly within a 'Sensitive area'? Sensitive Areas are: - SSSI. - National Park. - World Heritage Site. - A scheduled Ancient Monument. - ANOB. - A European Site – SAC, CSAC etc.		NO
Have the Welsh Ministers issued a screening Direction?		NO
Has an ES been submitted?		NO

Based on the above information is a Detailed Screening Opinion Required? YES

Date: 10th October 2023

Detailed EIA Screening Assessment.

In answering the following questions due regard must be given to the impact of the development taking into account:-

- (a) the magnitude and spatial extent of the impact (for example geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- (b) the nature of the impact;
- (c) the transboundary nature of the impact;
- (d) the intensity and complexity of the impact;
- (e) the probability of the impact;
- (f) the expected onset, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact;
- (g) the cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development;
- (h) the possibility of effectively reducing the impact.

Questions to be considered.	Yes, No, Unknown – provide description.	For Yes/Unknown are effects likely to be significant?
Criterion 1. Character of Development		
Question 1a Size and Design of Development.		

Will the design, Construction, Operation or decommission of the project involve actions which will cause physical changes in the locality (topography, land use, changes in waterbodies etc)?	Yes – the quarrying activity will result in changes to landscape and topography	No – planning permission for the quarrying activity has been granted in August 2011 and there is no significant change to the quarrying process, some small amendments to phasing is all that is proposed. The previous extension application was EIA development and the physical changes to the locality from the quarrying activity have already been assessed as not significant.
Question 1b Cumulation with Other Existing Development and/or Approved Development.		
Are there any other factors which should be considered such as: • Consequential development which could lead to Environment effects? • The Potential for cumulative impacts with other existing approved development or planning activities in the locality? • Any plans for future land uses on or around the location which could be affected by the project? • Transfrontier impact?	NO- the site is in an isolated area and there is very little development in the area	
Question 1c Use of Natural Resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;		
Will construction or operation of the project use natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity etc. which are non-renewable or in short supply?	Yes – Building Stone	NO – Planning permission was granted in August 2011 for the extraction of the rock. This proposal does not involve any additional extraction or alteration of boundaries
Question 1d. Production of Waste		
Will the project produce solid wastes during construction or operation or decommissioning?	Yes – Waste rock	NO – the amount of waste rock is greater than initially anticipated. It is proposed to continue to remove this additional waste rock as aggregate rather than as dimensional stone. A similar quantity of waste rock will be retained on site for use in restoration as was envisaged when planning permission was

		granted in 2011 – although this is likely to be a bit less this would not have any significant impacts.
Question 1e. Pollution and Nuisances.		
Will the project involve use, storage, transport, handling or production of substances or materials which could be harmful to human health or the environment or raise concerns about actual or perceived risks to human health?	Yes – there is potential at any quarry for dust to be produced and that can have perceived risks to human health	NO – the potential impact of dust was considered in the ES submitted in relation to P2010/0026 and the impact was considered not to be significant provided the Dust Action Plan was followed. There are no additional significant effects resulting from these proposals which would be minor changes in nature
Will the project cause noise and vibration or release of light, heat energy or electromagnetic radiation?	Yes – the project has the potential to produce noise	NO – the potential impact of noise was considered in the ES submitted in relation to P2010/0026 and the impact was not considered to be significant. There are numerous conditions relating to the control of noise and these would be retained.
Will the project release pollutants or any hazardous, toxic or noxious substances to air, or lead to risks of contamination of land or water (including surface waters, groundwater, coastal waters or the sea)?	Yes – potential release of additional diesel fumes	NO – the number of product carrying vehicles would not change from the currently permitted 750 tonnes per week, which would be adequate to allow for the dimension stone and the aggregates. Application P2013/0212 was EIA development and the impact of the 7x20 tonne vehicles was considered in that application not to be significant provided suitable repairs were undertaken to the highway. The size of vehicles carrying dimensional stone and masonry products will potentially increase but the numbers will be similar to that already permitted.
Question 1f Risk of accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge.		
Will there be any risk of accidents and/or disasters	Potentially – from unknown if there were any fuel/oils spills	NO - Additional HGV's using the highway have been

relevant to the development concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge during construction or operation of the project?	from plant on site these could find their way into the quarry void or into ground water	assessed in ES's submitted in relation to P2010/0026 and P2013/0212. Provided highway repairs are undertaken the risks are not considered to be significant Significant Impacts relating to spillages of oils/fuels are also relatively unlikely, machines should be regularly serviced, relatively simple, best practice measures can be employed in relation to preventing spillages and dealing with them if they occur. In terms of potential impacts relating to certain chemicals/oils etc, it is reasonably assumed that any leaks or spills would be dealt with relatively soon, but the potential for leaks and spills would occur from the start of site operations and throughout the lifetime of the site so the duration of the risk would be relatively long. As mentioned above, spills are reversible via relatively simple means (spill kits etc.) but if contamination did get into groundwater, it would be more complicated to deal with but would still be reversible over time, if the source of contamination on site were stopped, but at this point local water courses may already have suffered damage from pollution. Significant impacts in relation to this are not likely enough to require consideration via a full ES in this particular regard.
Are there risks to human health for example due to water contamination or air pollution?	Yes – fugitive dust emissions from site could exacerbate any existing breathing difficulties in people leaving nearby the site, there is also potential for spills to get into the water	NO – the site has an approved surface water drainage system and has a Permit from NRW which controls water contamination. Air pollution has been considered in the

	environment, but it is not known if there are any springs/wells in the area that supply potable water to residential properties.	previous permission and was not considered to be significant.
Criterion 2 Location of development.		
Question 2a Existing and approved land use.		
Will the project result in social changes for example, in demography, traditional lifestyles employment?	NO	
Are there any routes or facilities or approved facilities on or around the location, which are used by the public for access to recreation or other facilities, which could be affected by the project?	YES – the road from the quarry to the A4068 at Cwmllynfell is used to access Common Land	NO – the number of product carrying vehicles will The size of vehicles carrying dimensional stone and masonry products will potentially increase but the numbers will be similar to that already permitted.
Are there any transport routes or approved routes which are susceptible to congestion or which cause environmental problems, which could be affected by the project?	YES – the road from the quarry to the A4068 at Cwmllynfell is a narrow mountain road	NO – No the site already has planning permission for the removal and transportation of rock from the site. The proposals does not seek to increase the tonnages exported from the site but would seek greater flexibility in lorry sizes, which has been discussed with the highways department of the council. The max tonnage would still be a payload of 24 tonnes, as previously permitted – it is not considered that this would result in significant impacts over and above any potential impacts already occurring. There are 11 existing passing bays on the route and the road is lightly trafficked.
Is the project located in a previously undeveloped area where there will be loss of greenfield land?	NO – the lateral extent of the site has been established; works are now focusing on going deeper.	
Are there any areas on or around the location occupied by land uses or approved land uses which could be affected by the project, particularly sensitive land uses e.g. hospitals, schools, places of worship, community facilities?	YES – there is a Chapel nearby and there is a Primary School at Cwmllynfell	NO – the site does not work on a Sunday and therefore does not affect the Chapel to any significant degree. Lorry traffic from the quarry is not permitted during school drop-off and pick-up times.

Question 2b Relative Abundance, Availability, Quality and Regenerative Capacity of Natural Resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground;		
Are there any areas on or around the location which contain important, high quality or scarce resources e.g. groundwater, surface waters, forestry, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, minerals, soil, land, water and biodiversity, which could be affected by the project?	Yes – the site lies within the Mynydd Y Garth Special Landscape Area as defined in LDP	No – site is well screened in the landscape by topography and vegetation. The proposal will not change the potential impact in relation to landscape to any significant extent – the restoration plan can be discussed prior to submission to try and ensure minimal landscape impacts, and/or enhancement.
Question 2c Absorption Capacity of the Natural Environment		
Are there any other areas on or around the location which are important or sensitive for reasons of their ecology, or are used by protected, important or sensitive species of fauna or floras which could be affected by the project?	Yes – Gwrhyd meadows SSSI, 350 metres to the south, Cefn Gwrhyd SSSI, 980 metres to the south west and coed cefn du SSSI, approx. 1.4 kms to the south.	NO – the proposals would not extend the site any further laterally only depth, so there would be no further removal/disturbance of habitat surrounding the site. final restoration will have potentials for benefits for flora and fauna
Are there any inland, coastal, marine, river mouths, riparian area or underground waters on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	NO	
Are there any areas or feature of high landscape or scenic value on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	YES – the site lies within the Mynydd Y Garth Special Landscape Area as defined in the LDP	NO – the site is well screen from public viewpoints by topography and vegetation. The proposal will not increase the potential impact which was not considered significant during the grant of planning permission P2010/0026. The boundaries of the site have been long established and the site would not be getting any bigger laterally only depth – which would not be likely to increase visual impact as the existing quarry form and topography would screen any increases in depth.
Is the project in a location where it is likely to be highly visible to many people?	NO	
Are there any areas on or around the location which are densely populated or built-up, which could be affected by the project?	NO	

Are there any areas, landscapes, sites or features of historic, archaeological or cultural importance or significance on or around the location which could be affected by the project?	NO	
Are there any areas on or around the location which are already subject to pollution or environmental damage e.g where existing legal environmental quality standards are exceeded, which could be affected by the project? Or in which it is considered there is such a failure? Such as AQMA?	NO	
Is the project located susceptible to subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding or extreme or adverse climatic conditions, which could cause the project to present environmental problems?	YES – the area has a high rainfall and is relatively exposed to the elements	NO – the site is well screened. There is an approved surface water drainage system in place which would appear to cope with the rainfall. Wind can increase noise travel but this is not considered to be a significant issue due to the sparsity of the population and the distance of property from the site.

Statement Of Reasons
In coming to this decision the Authority has had due regard to all information submitted by the developers; the available results of other environmental assessments as well as the criteria set out within schedule 3. The Authority's main reasons for coming to this decision are set out within the above table. In conclusion, the Authority is of the opinion that the proposed amendments, either alone or in combination, are unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the environment. This is on the understanding that the above identified effect could be avoided or prevented as specified within the table. As such, the likely effect of the development are unlikely to be significant enough to warrant EIA development.