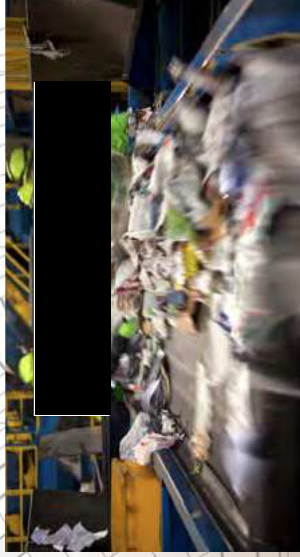
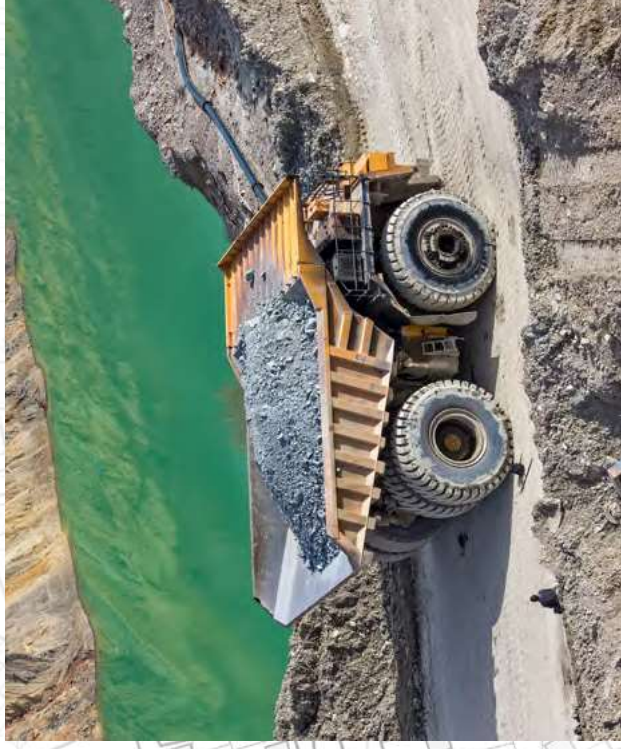


County Durham Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations Document

Assessment of potential Minerals and Waste sites in County Durham - submitted in response to a call for sites 2021

September 2021



Altogether better

Table 7: Site M4 - Boldron Cross Lanes Proposed New Site

Proposed Operator:	Breedon
Location:	The proposed allocation lies to the north of the A66(T) both to the west and east of the B6277 Cross Lanes Junction. Boldron lies 700 metres to the west.
Allocation area:	The proposed allocation extends to approximately 40 hectares. It forms two distinct areas of land. The western area of land comprises (lying to the west of the B6277 and north of the A66(T) and lying to the east of North Bitts Farm (approximately 23 hectares) comprises seven fields one under broadleaved woodland (Princess Charlotte Wood) the northern end of which contains two artificial ponds. The eastern area of land comprises three large agricultural fields to the north of the A66(T) and east of the B6277 and lying to the west of Street Side Farm (approximately 17 hectares). The farmland is divided by a relatively intact network of old hedgerows with scattered hedgerow trees. Some hedgerows, particularly along the site perimeter have been replaced by wire fences. The site excludes but encloses a group of properties beside the B6277: Ivy Cottage, Smithy Cottage and The Smithy. An isolated property at Cross Lanes sits between the site and the A66(T).
Mineral to be Extracted and proposed works:	<p>The potential mineral reserve is estimated at 20 million tonnes of carboniferous limestone. Breedon anticipate that this mineral would be extracted over a forty-year period at a rate of 500,000 tonnes per annum. Breedon have advised that the preferred start date would be circa 2028 meaning that the resulting end date would be approximately 2068.</p> <p>Breedon have advised that advanced works comprising tree planting, landscaping and construction of screen mounds would be undertaken along the boundaries of the proposed site followed by construction of the site access site infrastructure. Mineral extraction would involve the development of two benches down to a depth of approximately 20 metres with the direction of working and phasing being designed to minimise impact on the local environment. Both drilling and blasting would be undertaken followed by processing operations. Breedon have advised that the main objective of the subsequent restoration would be to deliver enhanced biodiversity through the development of a number of habitats including rock outcrops and screes, agricultural land – low productivity pasture and meadow, calcareous grassland, tree and shrub planting, water bodies and wetlands. Breedon have also advised that footpaths and public access would be provided through site restoration.</p> <p>Agricultural land, woodland and ponds.</p>
Current Land use:	
Development Plan History:	The proposed site at Boldron/Cross Lanes has not been previously nominated for an allocation.

Development Management History (Summary)	The proposed site has not been subject to any previous interest in mineral working.
Environmental Designations:	The site is principally constrained by a local landscape designation.
Landscape (Summary see Appendix 1)	<p>The site lies in an area identified as an Area of Higher Landscape Value (AHLV) in the County Durham Plan. Landscape Strategy. The site lies within an area identified in the County Durham Landscape Strategy (2008) as a Landscape Conservation Priority Area (LCPA) with strategies of 'conserve and enhance' and 'conserve and restore'.</p> <p>The working of the reserves in this area would be likely to result in some significant effects on a valued landscape and localised significant visual effects.</p>
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	The proposed allocation is not sited within any nationally or locally designated sites. The nearest nationally designated site lies Kilmord Scar Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies approximately 1.7 km to the south west and beyond the existing Kilmord Wood Quarry. The nearest Local Wildlife Site (LWS), Thorsgill Wood LWS lies approximately 750 metres to the north. A full ecological assessment of the site would also be expected at the planning application stage. The restoration of the proposed allocation be designed to provide biodiversity net gains and support coherent ecological networks, in line with the requirements of the NPPF and the County Durham Plan. The restoration strategy should also aim to support the priorities of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, delivering geo-diversity benefits where possible.
Cultural Heritage	There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments or Conservation Areas within the vicinity of the proposed allocation. However, lying outside the site within its immediate vicinity there are two Listed Buildings/structures. A Grade II Listed building (Cross Lanes Farmhouse with Adjacent Outbuildings on West) lies at Cross Hills Junction and a Grade II Listed milestone lies along the A66 approximately 120 metres from Cross Hills Junction. The impact of the proposal on the setting of listed buildings needs careful consideration. Through the planning application process an appraisal of impact on cultural heritage will be required.
Archaeology	The archaeological potential at the site is likely to be limited. Through the planning application process any site more than 1 hectare in size would need evaluation with subsequent mitigation (generally excavation and recording) if anything found.
Hydrogeology and Flood Risk	The site lies on the Great Limestone aquifer which is classified by the Environment Agency as a secondary (minor) aquifer capable of supporting local water supplies and base flows to streams but not large-scale water

	<p>supply. The proposed site lies in Flood Zone 1 and therefore the proposed extension has a low probability of flooding. It is anticipated that northern part of the Extension Scheme could include mineral extraction below the water table, in a similar manner to that at Hulands Quarry, but this designed to not actively dewater large volumes of groundwater and an appropriate stand-off would be maintained to avoid any adverse drawdown of the water table in relation to Thorsgill Beck to the north of the Extension Site. Pre application monitoring would be required if proposals include dewatering. Any planning application will need to demonstrate that unacceptable adverse impacts on groundwater quantity and quality do not occur and that suitable mitigation measures are in place or can be implemented and in particular that local private water supply is not derogated in either quality or quantity. Water management on site will need to monitor and manage both surface water and groundwater. Through the preparation of a planning application detailed hydrological and hydrogeological investigation and risk assessment would be required.</p>
<p>Access and Traffic</p>	<p>No information has been provided on site access arrangements or vehicle numbers for the proposed site. HGVs would need to access the proposed site via a suitable access off the B6277 and then via the A66(T) at the existing Cross Lanes Junction. Northbound traffic along the B6277 would be unsuitable as this route would require vehicles to travel into Barnard Castle. Further information would need to be made available by Breedon on vehicle numbers and traffic and transport considerations for the proposed site.</p> <p>The junction of the B6277 and A66(T) at Cross Lanes is due to be replaced by Highway's England as part of the A66(T) Northern Trans-Pennine project which is seeking to improve the A66(T) between M6 junction 40 at Penrith and the A1(M) at Scotch Corner. On 14 June 2021 Highways England asked the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State for its opinion (a Scoping Opinion) as to the information to be provided in an Environmental Statement (ES) relating to the proposed development. The Scoping Opinion explains that subject to approval being put in place the A66(T) Northern Trans-Pennine project is due to start construction in 2024 with the intention of the route being fully open in 2031, (although it is currently anticipated that the construction activities would commence in 2024 and the scheme open to traffic in 2029 (following a 5-year accelerated construction programme)).</p> <p>The Scoping Opinion also explains that Cross Lanes to Rokeby is one of the schemes where further consideration of alternative route alignments is ongoing. A number of route alignments are set out in the Scoping Opinion would affect the proposed site allocation. The black route (included within the Preferred Route Announcement) would directly impact on the availability of land to the east of the B6277 junction. This route includes the upgrade of the existing junction at Cross Lanes to a compact grade separated junction. A number of</p>

	<p>alternative alignment routes to the black route are now under further, the alternate route at Cross lanes. The blue route would directly impact on the availability of land to west of the B6277 junction. This route includes a new grade separated junction on the A66 linking Rutherford Lane to the south and the B6277 Moorhouse Lane to the north, located west of the existing Cross Lanes priority junction. In addition, a new adjacent westbound carriageway would be constructed to the south between the B6277 junction at Cross Lanes and the existing Tutta Beck Cottage access.</p> <p>The upgrading of the A66(T) and the proposed works to replace the existing junction at Cross Lanes will impact upon the proposed allocations availability for development and is a specific reason which prevents the Council from allocating land for mineral working at this site. To protect the preferred route from potentially conflicting new development Highways England has asked local planning authorities to register the red line boundary. This means that there is route protection on the land. In addition, local planning authorities are required to consult Highways England before granting planning permission for development which is likely to prejudice the A66(T) upgrade works.</p> <p>While it is likely that the new junction will provide a suitable access onto the A66(T) and that the assumed traffic flows would be unlikely to have a discernible environmental impact on traffic flow and highway safety, further information on vehicle numbers and traffic and transport considerations for the proposed site would need to be made available by Breedon and this will need to be considered in relation to the Highways England's plans for the upgraded A66(T) and the new junction at Cross Lanes. Should the site be allocated highway issues relating to the sheeting of vehicles leaving the site, provision of wheel washes, maintenance of haul roads and cleanliness of the adjacent highway would need to be controlled by planning conditions.</p>
Amenity	<p>The proposed allocation lies in rural area. However, a number of residential properties lie between the two areas of the Boldron Cross Lanes site and along the B6277 at the existing Cross Lanes junction. In addition, operational farms lie both to the east and west of the proposed allocation. The site would also be potentially visible from elevated sections of the proposed A66(T) overbridge junction. The principal effects of working on amenity would be in respect to visual impact including lighting and impacts from noise, dust and blasting. The proximity of the residential properties and farms (if retained in situ) would impact on the ability of the operator to design an acceptable scheme of working which would not result in unacceptable adverse impacts. Suitable standoffs would be required to protect amenity from the operational impacts. Through the planning application process any planning application will need to demonstrate that unacceptable adverse impacts do not occur and that suitable mitigation measures are in place or can be implemented. Noise, dust and blasting assessments</p>

	would have to be undertaken as part of the preparation of any future planning application if the site were to be allocated.
Public Rights of Way	<p>Two Public Right of Way (PROW) cross the western part of the proposed site (north to south along its western boundary (FP 7 Rokeby) and east to west (FP 8 Rokeby) and four PROW lie to the west of the site (FP14 & 19 Boldron, FP19 and FP1 Bowes) one across the eastern part of the site (FP 14 Rokeby). The PROW within the proposed allocation would need to be to be satisfactorily diverted throughout the working life of the site. In the interests of the amenity of users preferably the temporary diversion should not be adjacent to the A66(T). Potentially these PROW could be diverted around the western and northern perimeters of the site. Following restoration, the PROW could revert back to its original route, or the diversion made permanent. Potentially improvements to the PROW network could be considered through the restoration of the site. Views into the site will need to be addressed and satisfactorily mitigated from any PROW which would be affected.</p> <p>The land is believed to be grade 3 agricultural land (subgrade not available). Given the size of the site extension the proposal may result in the loss of good quality agricultural land (best and most versatile), however, this would need to be confirmed by any subsequent planning application. Through the preparation of a planning application an agricultural land classification statement would be required to assess the quality of the agricultural land.</p> <p>The proposed site is located within a rural landscape which accommodates two operational carboniferous limestone quarries and the A66(T). Kilmord Wood Quarry lies approximately 1 km to the west and south of the A66(T) and Hulands Quarry lies approximately 3.2 km to the west. The County Durham Plan Preferred Area to extend Hulands Quarry lies approximately 1.9 km to the west. A proposal to extend the Preferred Area to the east is also being proposed and if allocated would lie approximately 1.6 km to the west.</p>
Agricultural Land	
Cumulative Impacts	<p>It is considered that all mineral sites will have cumulative environmental impacts arising from the effects of working over an extended period regardless of mitigation measures and it is considered that many of these can only be accurately determined through a planning application accompanied by an environmental statement informed by detailed site-specific assessments. Nevertheless, it is considered that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In visual and landscape terms there would be potentially significant cumulative effects in relation to the existing Hulands Quarry workings in combination with the County Durham Plan Preferred Area at Hulands Quarry, Kilmord Wood Quarry in relation to the combined effects of perimeter mounds along the A66(T). In addition, sections of the A66(T) are also proposed to be upgraded as part of the A66(T) Trans Pennine Project including via a bypass at Bowes and at Cross Lanes to Rokeby including junction improvements at Cross Lanes. The potential for significant cumulative effects in combination with other existing minerals and waste development and other proposals including the A66 Trans-Pennine project are possible.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of traffic, due to the limited information it is not possible to ascertain whether there would be potentially cumulative impacts, but this is possible given the size of the proposed site and the scale of working which is proposed.
<p>Need and Economic Factors</p>	<p>The Planning Practice Guidance advises that in considering proposals for new sites and extensions to existing sites it is important to consider the need for the mineral. It is considered that need should be considered at a County level, by resource type (i.e. magnesian limestone, carboniferous limestone or dolerite (the three types of crushed rock extracted from quarries within County Durham or by sand and gravel)) and that consideration should be given to the distribution of permitted reserves across sites within the County and the extent of permitted reserves within a particular sites and the scale of sales that the site has achieved in the past or could reasonably achieve in the future.</p> <p>Through the provisions of the County Durham Plan a need for additional carboniferous limestone was identified to ensure a steady and adequate supply of carboniferous limestone over the period to 2035. The County Durham Plan identified an additional requirement for 14.2 million tonnes of carboniferous limestone and 11.9 million tonnes was allocated to contribute to meeting the identified need under Policy 58 (Preferred Areas for Future Carboniferous Limestone Extraction) on land east of Hulands Quarry near Bowes and on land west of Heights Quarry near Eastgate. The Preferred Area to the east of Hulands Quarry contains 8.2 million tonnes of limestone and should planning permission be granted this site will enable the site to produce up to 300,000 tonnes of carboniferous limestone per annum. The Preferred Area to the west of Heights Quarry contains 3.7 million tonnes of limestone and will enable this quarry to also produce up 300,000 tonnes of carboniferous limestone per annum.</p> <p>The Council's latest Local Aggregate Assessment advised that provision remains for a further 2.93 million tonnes of carboniferous limestone to be made to meet the County Durham Plan target of 14.1 million tonnes and it recommended that scope for additional provision is considered through work to prepare the M&WDPD, thereby helping to reinforce long term supply and productive capacity. Through work to prepare the draft plan and consider the proposed site allocations this issue has been considered further.</p> <p>The need identified in the County Durham Plan was sufficient to meet needs to 2035 plus ten years supply of carboniferous limestone and this forecast was calculated on this basis of 900,000 tonnes per annum. Therefore, this shortfall in supply is only equivalent to just over 3 years supply post 2042. It is considered that provided that the County Durham Plan allocation at Hulands Quarry for 8.2 million tonnes is permitted, that a site of the size</p>

	<p>and productive capacity of Boldron's Cross Lanes is not needed to maintain a steady and adequate supply of carboniferous limestone over the period to 2035. It is considered that subject to planning permission being granted to an environmentally acceptable extension to Hulands Quarry, that this Preferred Area (on land to the east of Hulands Quarry) in combination with existing permissions at Heights Quarry (which now has planning permission to 31st September 2046) and Kilmond Wood Quarry (which has planning permission to 21 February 2042) should provide for a sufficient supply of carboniferous limestone. Furthermore, additional mineral may become available if mineral extraction were to resume at Broadwood Quarry (although the Joint LAA recognises that it is not certain that working will resume in Phase 3 and therefore the contribution to future supply is currently considered to be zero).</p> <p>The proposal would provide for both direct and indirect employment associated with the winning and working of minerals throughout the life of the scheme. There would also be opportunities for businesses, including local companies to supply goods and services throughout the life of the extension scheme. However, given the anticipated timescale and duration of working at the proposed allocation these economic benefits would largely fall beyond the Plan period.</p> <p>Potentially Boldron Cross Lanes lying to the north of the A66(T) would be well placed to serve the A66(T) Trans Pennine Project. However, given the timescale of this project it considered that the A66(T) Trans Pennine Project material requirements requirement from County Durham could be served by existing permitted reserves at Kilmond Wood Quarry in association with the reserves which could become available from within the County Durham Plan Preferred Area which lies to the east of Hulands Quarry which would be worked over approximately 27 years at a rate of 300,000 tonnes per annum.</p>
<p>Locational Approach to the Future Supply of Primary Aggregates</p>	<p>It is considered that locationally this allocation complies with the requirements of County Durham Plan Policy 50 (Locational Approach to the Future Supply of Primary Aggregates). The site falls outside of and not adversely affect the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the County Durham Heritage Coast, or upon the County's Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, Historic Battlefield, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The site does not either contain or could adversely affect internationally and nationally designated sites and irreplaceable habitats.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>The proposed site at Boldron Cross Lanes should not be allocated within the Minerals and Waste Policies and Allocations document. The Council considers that existing permissions for the winning and working of carboniferous limestone at Kilmond Wood Quarry, Heights Quarry and at Hulands Quarry in combination with</p>

the reserves within the Preferred Area allocated under Policy 58 should be sufficient to ensure a steady and adequate supply of carboniferous limestone over the Plan period to 2035.

Breedon has proposed an anticipated start date would be approximately 2028 and the site would operate for 40 years. Therefore, this site is seeking to meet supply requirements up to 33 years beyond the Plan period. Should the site commence working in 2028 this would mean that this site would be in operation along with at least two existing permitted carboniferous limestone sites, Kilmond Wood Quarry which has permission until 2042 and Heights Quarry which has permission to 2046. Furthermore, subject to planning permission being granted to extend Hulands Quarry in accordance with the County Durham Plan allocation (Policy 58), it is likely that the proposed site would be operation with a third site which would be in operation until the late 2040s. Production of carboniferous limestone from the proposed site allocation in combination with other existing and allocated sites would result in a supply of carboniferous limestone which would be significantly in excess of both current and historical demand. This would not be consistent with a steady and adequate supply of aggregates. Highways England's scheme to upgrade the A66(T) and also to provide a new junction at Cross Lanes provides significant constraint which is likely to prevent the proposed allocation in its present form. As outlined above two route alignments are being considered at Cross Lanes, both of which would affect the proposed allocation and prevent its allocation in its present form. Should this site allocation be pursued the Council will need to consider the proposal in light of the final route alignment for the junction at Boldron Cross Lanes.

Map 5 - Boldron Cross Lanes Proposed New Site

