

HANSON QUARRY PRODUCTS EUROPE LIMITED

**PROPOSED RENEWAL OF TIME LIMITED PLANNING PERMISSION
REFERENCE C6/105/6A/PA**

at

**BLUBBERHOUSES SILICA SAND QUARRY
KEX GILL
NORTH YORKSHIRE**

PLANNING APPLICATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

December 2011

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NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Application Forms



North

Yorkshire County Council

Business and Environmental Services
County Hall, Northallerton
North Yorkshire, DL7 8AH

tel: 01609 780780 fax: 01609 532540
web: http://www.northyorks.gov.uk
email: planning.control@northyorks.gov.uk

Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission.

Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

You can complete and submit this form electronically via the Planning Portal by visiting www.planningportal.gov.uk/apply

Publication of applications on planning authority websites

Please note that the information provided on this application form and in supporting documents may be published on the Authority's website. If you require any further clarification, please contact the Authority's planning department.

Please complete using block capitals and black ink.

It is important that you read the accompanying guidance notes as incorrect completion will delay the processing of your application.

1. Applicant Name and Address
Title: [] First name: []
Last name: []
Company (optional): HANSON QUANTITY PRODUCERS LIMITED
Unit: [] House number: [] House suffix: []
House name: HANSON HOUSE
Address 1: 14 CASTLE HILL
Address 2: []
Address 3: []
Town: MAIDENHEAD
County: BERKSHIRE
Country: []
Postcode: SL6 4JT.

2. Agent Name and Address
Title: [] First name: []
Last name: []
Company (optional): HANSON UK
Unit: [] House number: [] House suffix: []
House name: GIFFORDS HOUSE
Address 1: YORK ROAD
Address 2: []
Address 3: []
Town: WESTBURY
County: WEST YORKSHIRE
Country: []
Postcode: LS22 7NS

3. Site Address Details

Please provide the full postal address of the application site.

Unit: House number: House suffix:

House name: BURRHOUSES QUARRY

Address 1: BURRHOUSES

Address 2: KEX GILL

Address 3:

Town: OTLEY

County: WEST YORKSHIRE

Postcode (optional): LS21 2FN

Description of location or a grid reference.
(must be completed if postcode is not known):

Easting: Northing:

Description:

4. Pre-application Advice

Has assistance or prior advice been sought from the local authority about this application? Yes No

If Yes, please complete the following information about the advice you were given. (This will help the authority to deal with this application more efficiently).

Please tick if the full contact details are not known, and then complete as much as possible:

Officer name: R. HILLAR, R. SMITH, P. ROBINSON

Reference:

Date (DD/MM/YYYY): 02/08/2011
(must be pre-application submission)

Details of pre-application advice received?
MEETING HELD WITH R. HILLAR, R. SMITH ON 2/8/11 TO DISCUSS EXTENT OF EIA. SCOPING REPORT SUBMITTED ON 30/09/11 BY HANSON. CASE OFFICER P. ROBINSON.

5. Description Of Your Proposal

Please provide a description of the approved development as shown on the decision letter, including the application reference number and date of decision in the sections below:

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PURPOSES OF EXTRACTION OF SILICA SAND BY SURFACE WORKING AND ERECTION OF A PROCESSING PLANT, BURRHOUSES SILICA SAND QUARRY, BURRHOUSES.

Reference number: C6/105/6A/PA Date of decision (DD/MM/YYYY): 27/01/1986 (date must be pre-application submission)

Please state the condition number(s) to which this application relates:

1.	<u>2</u>	6.	
2.		7.	
3.		8.	
4.		9.	
5.		10.	

Has the development already started? Yes No

If Yes, please state when the development started (DD/MM/YYYY): 1987 (date must be pre-application submission)

Has the development been completed? Yes No

If Yes, please state when the development was completed (DD/MM/YYYY): (date must be pre-application submission)

6. Condition(s) - Removal

Please state why you wish the condition(s) to be removed or changed:

THE TIME EXTENSION SEEKS TO RENEW THE PERMISSION FOR A FURTHER 25 YRS AS 4M³T OF REMAINING SILICA SAND REMAIN UNWORKED.

If you wish the existing condition to be changed, please state how you wish the condition to be varied:

AS ABOVE. PROPOSED RENEWAL OF TIME LIMITED PLANNING PERMISSION REF C6/105/6A/PA. CONDITION 2 STATES: AN WORKING SHALL CEASE AND THE SITE RESTORED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONDITIONS 25 BY 31/12/2011.

7. Ownership Certificates

One Certificate A, B, C, or D, must be completed with this application form

CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP - CERTIFICATE A

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Certificate under Article 12

I certify/The applicant certifies that on the day 21 days before the date of this application nobody except myself/ the applicant was the owner (*owner is a person with a freehold interest or leasehold interest with at least 7 years left to run*) of any part of the land or building to which the application relates.

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date DD/MM/YYYY:

[Signature]

[Signature]

CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP - CERTIFICATE B

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Certificate under Article 12

I certify/ The applicant certifies that I have/the applicant has given the requisite notice to everyone else (as listed below) who, on the day 21 days before the date of this application, was the owner (*owner is a person with a freehold interest or leasehold interest with at least 7 years left to run*) of any part of the land or building to which this application relates.

Name of Owner	Address	Date Notice Served
BLURBOWAY MOOR LIMITED	BROOKSIDE HALL, SANDRACH, CHESHIRE CW12 4LF. c/o MATTHEW SMITH.	6th Dec 2011

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date DD/MM/YYYY:

[Signature]

[Signature]

8/12/2011

CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP - CERTIFICATE C

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Certificate under Article 12

I certify/ The applicant certifies that:

- Neither Certificate A or B can be issued for this application
- All reasonable steps have been taken to find out the names and addresses of the other owners (*owner is a person with a freehold interest or leasehold interest with at least 7 years left to run*) of the land or building, or of a part of it, but I have/ the applicant has been unable to do so.

The steps taken were:

[Signature]

Name of Owner	Address	Date Notice Served

Notice of the application has been published in the following newspaper (circulating in the area where the land is situated):

[Signature]

On the following date (which must not be earlier than 21 days before the date of the application):

[Signature]

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date DD/MM/YYYY:

7. Ownership Certificates (continued)

CERTIFICATE OF OWNERSHIP - CERTIFICATE D

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Certificate under Article 12

I certify/ The applicant certifies that:

- Certificate A cannot be issued for this application
- All reasonable steps have been taken to find out the names and addresses of everyone else who, on the day 21 days before the date of this application, was the owner (*owner is a person with a freehold interest or leasehold interest with at least 7 years left to run*) of any part of the land to which this application relates, but I have/ the applicant has been unable to do so.

The steps taken were:

Notice of the application has been published in the following newspaper (circulating in the area where the land is situated):

On the following date (which must not be earlier than 21 days before the date of the application):

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date DD/MM/YYYY:

8. Agricultural Land Declaration

AGRICULTURAL LAND DECLARATION

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010 Certificate under Article 12

Agricultural Land Declaration - You Must Complete Either A or B

(A) None of the land to which the application relates is, or is part of, an agricultural holding.

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date (DD/MM/YYYY):

(B) I have/ The applicant has given the requisite notice to every person other than myself/ the applicant who, on the day 21 days before the date of this application, was a tenant of an agricultural holding on all or part of the land to which this application relates, as listed below:

Name of Tenant	Address	Date Notice Served
C/O IAN COX, DALLY GLEN + HARTLEY, (AGENT)	KEXGILL FARM, BOLTON ABBEY, NR SKIPTON BD23 6TP	6 th Dec 2011

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date (DD/MM/YYYY):

6/12/2011

9. Planning Application Requirements - Checklist

Please read the following checklist to make sure you have sent all the information in support of your proposal. Failure to submit all information required will result in your application being deemed invalid. It will not be considered valid until all information required by the Local Planning Authority has been submitted.

The original and 3 copies of a completed and dated application form:



The original and 3 copies of the completed, dated Ownership Certificate (A, B, C, or D - as applicable):



The original and 3 copies of other plans and drawings or information necessary to describe the subject of the application:



The original and 3 copies of the completed, dated Article 12 Certificate (Agricultural Holdings):



The correct fee:



10. Declaration

I/we hereby apply for planning permission/consent as described in this form and the accompanying plans/drawings and additional information.

Signed - Applicant:

Or signed - Agent:

Date (DD/MM/YYYY):

[Signature]

[Signature]

6/Dec 2011

(date cannot be pre-application)

11. Applicant Contact Details

Telephone numbers

Country code: National number: Extension number:

Country code: Mobile number (optional):

Country code: Fax number (optional):

Email address (optional):

12. Agent Contact Details

Telephone numbers

Country code: National number: Extension number:

Country code: Mobile number (optional):

Country code: Fax number (optional):

Email address (optional):

ben.ayres@hanson.biz

13. Site Visit

Can the site be seen from a public road, public footpath, bridleway or other public land?

Yes

No

If the planning authority needs to make an appointment to carry out a site visit, whom should they contact? (Please select only one)

Agent

Applicant

Other (if different from the agent/applicant's details)

If Other has been selected, please provide:

Contact name: R. Ayres ⁴⁹ HANSON UK

Telephone number: 07736 869692.

Email address: ben.ayres@hanson.biz



NORTH YORKSHIRE PLANNING AUTHORITIES VALIDATION REQUIREMENTS

**NYP13 : APPLICATION FOR REMOVAL OR VARIATION OF A CONDITION
FOLLOWING THE GRANT OF PLANNING PERMISSION (SECTION 73 OF THE TOWN
AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990)**

For any application to be registered as a valid application it must be accompanied by the relevant forms, plans and supporting documents which are necessary to provide sufficient information for the application to be properly considered and determined. These notes and the document "Validation Requirements for Planning and Other Applications Submitted under the Town and Country Planning Acts" which can be obtained from the Authority's web site, are intended to guide you in putting your application together. We can only accept your application as legally valid if all the necessary information is provided to an acceptable standard.

Unless submitted electronically, one original with three copies of the application form, plans and supporting documents must be provided.

Please return this form with your application with all relevant boxes ticked to illustrate the material submitted as part of the application.

		✓
1. FORMS		
Completed application form (signed and dated)		
2. PLANS		
Location Plan at a scale of 1:1250 or 1:2500 to show:	The direction of North	✓
	Application site edged red/other land owned by the applicant edged blue	✓
	Wherever possible, at least 2 named roads and surrounding buildings	✓
Plans and drawings necessary to deal with the matters reserved by conditions of the permission. All detailed drawings should include a scale bar where appropriate.		
3. CERTIFICATES		
Ownership Certificate Completed	Correct certificate – A, B, C or D as required	✓
Agricultural Holdings Certificate Completed	Required whether or not the site includes an agricultural holding	✓
4. DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT		
For detailed guidance on the requirements for a Design and Access Statement refer to table 6 of DCLG "Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation" document dated March 2010.		<i>N/A - refer to para 16 of Supplemental Statement.</i>
5. FEE		
Appropriate fee. For guidance refer to Circular 04/2008: Planning Related Fees or information on the Council's web site		✓

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Statement supporting the proposal with reference to the relevant condition(s); reasons for the condition(s) having been imposed; and any proposed replacement condition(s). In the case of condition(s) relating to biodiversity/habitat/greenspace, evidence from Natural England and/or Yorkshire Wildlife Trust supporting the proposal.

✓
REFER REFERENCE
TO ENVIRONMENTAL
STATEMENT (ES)

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Proposed Submission

Blubberhouses Quarry is a silica sand deposit located halfway between Harrogate and Skipton, just off the A59 as shown on Plan ref B168/16.

ARC Limited (now known as Hanson) acquired Blubberhouses Silica Sand Company (BSSC), a joint venture between Longcliffe Quarries and the Blubberhouses Estate in 1988. The quarry was then operated by Buckland Industrial Minerals a subsidiary of ARC Limited.

The initial development of the quarry was undertaken by BSSC. The processing plant was established and mineral extraction commenced in 1987.

The site was operational until 1991 and has since been mothballed with significant planned reserves remaining un-worked.

Hanson has a leasehold interest in the site from the Blubberhouses Moor Limited (formally Sibelco (UK) Limited).

Hanson is putting forward proposals for the renewal of the time limited planning permission reference C6/105/6A/PA dated 27th January 1986.

Condition 2 of the planning permission authorises mineral extraction at the site until 31st December 2011 (a copy of which is included in appendix 1), however 4.05m/t of planned silica sand reserves remain unworked.

The application seeks the renewal of the permission for a further 25 years.

Blubberhouses Quarry is located entirely within the Nidderdale AONB and located adjacent to the North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (also referred to as Natura 2000 sites).

Plan ref B168/17 indicates the processing plant area and the extent of the permitted extraction phases. It also shows the proposed route of the Kex Gill road diversion which was required as part of the original planning permission.

The original processing plant was demolished in 2007 as the plant had become a serious health and safety concern with persistent trespassing since the site was mothballed.

The current planning consent required that any proposed new plant or machinery has to be submitted for prior approval by North Yorkshire County Council. The design of a new processing plant would have regard to its sensitive surroundings.

1.2 Format of the submission

This submission is made on behalf of Hanson Quarry Products Europe Limited, referred to throughout this document as "Hanson".

Section 1 of this submission provides a supporting planning application statement and appendix documents which outlines the background to the site as well as providing a summary of the current proposals.

Sections 2 and 3 of the submission document incorporates the Environmental Statement, which draws together through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process a series of studies into the potential impact of these proposals on the local environment.

The format and scope of the EIA was outlined in a Scoping report which was submitted to North Yorkshire County Council by Hanson in September 2011 under the provisions of the EIA regulations.

Environmental issues are considered within the supporting statement, whilst the Environmental Statement provides detailed assessment of the potential impacts from the development.

1.3 The applicant company

Hanson is one of the largest suppliers of heavy building materials to the construction industry. Hanson produce aggregates (crushed rock, sand and gravel) ready mixed and precast concrete, asphalt and cement-related materials and a range of building products including concrete pipes, concrete pavers, tiles and clay bricks.

The Hanson Industrial Sands business currently operates sites at Reigate and Wrotham in the South of England which produce a range of products including Glass sands, dried & foundry sand and equestrian & leisure sands.

Hanson is part of the Heidelberg Cement Group, which employs 57,000 people across five continents. Heidelberg Cement is the global leader in aggregates and has leading position in cement, concrete and heavy building products.

Operations in North Yorkshire are managed by the regional team based at the Clifford House, York Road, Wetherby LS22 7NS.

1.4 Sustainability and Hanson Environmental Management System

Appendix 3 contains the Hanson UK Performance and Sustainability Report 2011.

The report includes information, case studies and targets on a variety of topics from carbon emissions management to health and safety, and highlights both achievements and areas where improvements are needed.

It brings together data from our Entropy software system and Environmental Management systems collected from within the Aggregates, Cement and Building Products businesses during 2010.

Hanson maintains a documented environmental management system for all its activities.

By using the environmental management system, objectives and targets for improvement can be formulated. These are used to develop and establish an

Environmental Management Programme for implementing works and improving practices at each site.

1.5 Community liaison and involvement

Whilst operations have been mothballed at Blubberhouses Quarry Hanson management in the area have been actively involved with developing local partnership and community initiatives at other sites in North Yorkshire over a number of years.

For example the quarry management team encourage school & university visits to Pateley Bridge quarry and the Coldstones Cut viewing platform is a landmark feature for the area which was developed in partnership with the local community and Harrogate Borough Council.

A quarry liaison group was also established at Pateley Bridge quarry in the 1990's which plays an important role in ensuring appropriate action is taken in the event that complaints or concerns are raised at the site .

The school visits, which form part of the National Curriculum objectives, provide an opportunity for children to learn about mineral extraction and to debate environmental and community issues.

The Hanson management team from the nearby Pateley Bridge quarry were involved with a workshop with Nidderdale High school on the science and art of glass making as part of the GCSE chemistry course and the pupils used sand from the Blubberhouses site to make products some of which are on display at the Pateley Bridge quarry offices.

As part of securing a recent planning permission at Pateley Bridge quarry Hanson has provided an increased financial commitment to a local environmental trust fund called the Greenhow Landscape & Biodiversity Enhancement Fund, to help support environmental and biodiversity projects in the local area.

The opinions of local residents and the wider community are essential and are valued by Hanson, and as part of the scoping submission Hanson has contacted Washburn Parish Council and local wildlife groups such as the Bradford Ornithological Group who had previously expressed an interest in the restoration proposals for the site.

Hanson will consider carefully the views and opinions of statutory and non statutory bodies as well as the local community during the determination process.

As part of the renewal application Hanson proposes to set up a quarry liaison group who can meet regularly to review working and restoration progress and as a forum for any concerns raised about the operations.

Residents and local Councillors will be invited to attend and minutes of the meetings will be issued to all residents in the area.

1.6 Design and Access statement

A requirement for planning applications to be accompanied by a design and access statement was introduced by section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and took effect on 10 August 2006.

Article 4C of the Town and Country Planning (GDP) Order 1995 (as amended) sets out the various categories of planning applications to which the above requirement does not apply. Applications for mining operations are one of the exclusions.

It is therefore considered that a Design and Access Statement is not required for this application.

2.0 The Application Site

2.1 Location and Land ownership

Blubberhouses quarry is a silica sand deposit within the Blubberhouses Estate located halfway between Harrogate and Skipton, just off the A59 as shown on Plan ref B168/16.

The Planning permission boundary is shown on Plan ref B168/17 and extends to 206 acres or 83.43 ha of which 95 acres or 38.66ha is the permitted extraction area, with the remaining areas forming the plant site area and land required for the Kex Gill road relocation.

Hanson's minerals leasehold interest in the area, as shown Plan ref B126/22, extends to some 2870 acres or 1162 ha with currently undisturbed areas of the planning permission forming part of the Estates wider managed grouse moor.

The site is located in an open moorland landscape with isolated farm properties around the periphery. Sheep belonging to the tenant of Kexgill Farm graze the land within the planning permission area.

Kexgill farm is over 1km to the west of the processing plant area and is owned by Blubberhouses Moor Limited. Spittle Ings House and Burnt House are over 600 and 400 metres away from the northern boundary of the planning permission area.

Redshaw Hall is over 800 metres away from the northern boundary of the permission area with Bothams farm located just over a 1km to the south east of the southern planning permission boundary.

Kex Gill road which would be subject to diversion as part of the permitted development proposals runs north–south, effectively through the centre of the planned reserve.

On completion of the road diversion to the west of the permission boundary, a section of the old road was to become an extension to the bridleway which runs along the southern boundary of the planning permission. A footpath also crosses within the north-west corner of the planning permission area.

As part of the original application detailed designs on progressive heather moorland restoration for the site were prepared. The majority of the site would be restored to a productive grouse moor.

As shown on the previously approved restoration plans, a lake area to the north of the site would provide an attractive feature to compliment the restored undulating moorland landscape proposed on restoration.

If the time extension application is approved, a long-term management and landscape mitigation plan would be prepared for the management of areas of the site both during and after mineral extraction.

2.2 Planning history

Exploration of the Blubberhouses Estate in the late 70's early 80's revealed a new and valuable source of nationally important Silica sand which was well located to serve glass manufacturing companies in the north and across the UK.

A planning application for the development of Blubberhouses quarry was submitted to North Yorkshire County Council by the Blubberhouses Silica Sand Company Limited on 29th April 1983.

The County planning committee resolved in July 1983 that the application be referred to the Secretary of State for the Environment with a recommendation that conditional planning permission be granted.

Following an Inquiry the Secretary of State permitted the development as confirmed in his letter dated 11th February 1985, subject to the area of the planning permission being restricted to the extent shown on plan 2.

A revised application was submitted on 25th November 1985 and planning permission C6/105/6A/PA was granted on 27th January 1986.

A working and restoration scheme for the site was submitted on 25th June 1990 and was approved on 10th September 1990.

On the 10th of July 1991 North Yorkshire County Council confirmed approval for the tidying and landscaping works proposed by the company in light of the proposal to mothball the site and also agreed the maximum area of mineral extraction that could take place within Phase 2 prior to the diversion of Kex Gill road (please refer to appendix 6).

In January 2000, notification of a Periodic Review of the planning permission under the provisions of the Environment Act was served by North Yorkshire County Council.

Following submission of a postponement application North Yorkshire County Council confirmed their agreement on 26th July 2000 to the postponement of the review to coincide with the expiry of the existing planning permission at the site on 31st December 2011 (please refer to appendix 1).

Under the current permission, 4.05 m/t of planned reserves still remain at the site which at projected levels of silica sand sales envisaged once a new processing plant is installed would equate to circa 20 to 25 years life.

Extensive reserves (up to 10m/t) extend beyond the current planned area and formed part of the original planning application submitted in 1983 but the planned area shown on Plan ref B168/17 was deemed sufficient by the Secretary of State to ensure security of investment for the high cost of the processing plant and to provide reasonable security of supply to UK glass manufacturers.

Hanson has made submissions at various stages of the North Yorkshire County Council Mineral & Waste Development Framework process.

These submissions confirmed the strategic importance of the planned reserve and the need for the County to maintain its Silica Sand land bank reserve in line with national planning policy.

The 1986 permission included commitments for an extensive assessment of Heather moorland restoration. Hanson will appoint independent specialist consultants to supervise the restoration work. Ecological survey and monitoring reports will be provided as part of the management plan to be entered into on grant of planning permission for the 25 year time extension.

2.3 The initial development of the original quarry operation

Since the site was mothballed the current land uses can be characterised as follows:

- Quarry entrance and access road
- Former processing plant site area and conveyor route to extraction areas
- Screening banks and Peat /Heather storage areas
- Phase 1 Silt lagoon areas
- Phase 2 Working area
- Restored heather moorland area
- Undisturbed grouse moorland
- Established tree planting areas

The consented working and restoration scheme approved under condition 3 of the 1986 planning permission, divided mineral extraction into 5 phases (as shown on Plan ref B168/17) to aid the movement of overburden, management of silt and translocation of peat and heather. After phase 1 each phase was estimated to last approximately 4 years.

Under the approved scheme mineral would be blasted and crushed using a low level mobile crushing unit, located where possible at the base of the relevant phase of mineral working, and transported to the processing plant area by ground conveyor.

The conditions imposed in the planning permission in 1986 (see appendix 1) are quite similar to what would normally be required today, for example limits

have been placed on blasting and vibration and noise levels for plant and machinery.

The main processing plant operated under a permit issued by Her Majesty's inspectorate of Pollution (Reference 6606 dated 31st August 1989) which limited dust and air pollution from the various processing activities. This was returned in 1992 as the process had not been operated for over 12 months.

The main processing plant improved the physical and chemical properties of the sand to meet the end user specifications and used an acid leaching process, which required specialist technological experience and a high capital investment.

The installation of any new processing equipment would be subject to a new permit issued under the Pollution Prevention and Control (PPC) Regulations and be issued by Harrogate Borough Council.

All sales would be via the main processing and stockyard area and stock movements around the area would be carried out using a loading shovel which would also be used as required for loading road haulage vehicles.

A water bowser and dust suppression system would operate to help control dust around the plant site area and on internal conveyor and access routes.

All wagons would pass from the stockyard area over a weighbridge and sheeting area prior to leaving the site to join the A59.

Conditions attached to the current planning permission restrict the site to the production and sale of silica sand only and the output levels are also restricted by condition to 250,000 tonnes per year which would equate to approximately 40 loaded movements per day based on 20 tonne vehicles operating in accordance with the permitted hours of operation for the site.

The quarry provided employment for over 40 people directly and many more indirectly in haulage, maintenance and support services.

2.4 The proposed time extension and re-establishment of the operation

Planning permission C6/105/6A/PA dated 27th January 1986 authorises mineral extraction at the site until 31st December 2011, however 4.05m³/t of planned silica sand reserves remain unworked.

This application seeks the renewal of the permission for a further 25 years.

Whilst there are no immediate plans to recommence silica sand extraction, the reserve is strategically important for Hanson's silica sand business, and it is expected that mineral working will resume during the proposed time extension period.

The development of a new processing plant and associated infrastructure, such as the re-establishment of conveyor routes and the mobile crushing unit would be designed to ensure that there would be the minimum impact on the surrounding landscape.

Visual analysis would be used to ensure that the design and siting of the plant would be no higher than the original processing plant. The upper section of the plant which was demolished in 2007 was visible on the sky line but screen mounds around the plant site were effective in minimising views into the site (Please refer to appendix 7).

The design detail would be provided to the MPA for approval prior to installation of any new plant, buildings and machinery in line with the conditions of the existing planning permission.

Prior to the recommencement of mineral extraction, a revised restoration plan will be prepared which takes account of the breeding bird and wildlife interest that has resulted from the site being left in a mothballed condition. Liaison through a management committee with interest groups would aim to provide a plan that has diverse habitat areas across parts of the site.

As part of these revised proposals Hanson will use the “soil with turf fragment” technique to restore large areas back to heather moorland, with the use of “turves” (as carried out as part of the original permission) limited to transferring particular species e.g. cotton grasses, into specific habitat areas.

On grant of the extension of time for the planning permission, Hanson will enter into a management plan across the permission area for the 25 year period and for an extended period beyond the statutory 5 year aftercare period.

As part of the commitment Hanson will set up a management committee and local quarry liaison group which will meet at least yearly, with the frequency of meetings increasing on recommencement of site operations or when a specific area are to be stripped and /or restored.

The management committee could be made up of bodies such as the AONB, Natural England and interest groups such as Wharfedale Naturalists Society and the Washburn Wildlife Advisory Group.

3.0 Environmental Statement

Following submission of the scoping report to North Yorkshire County Council and as a result of earlier discussions with Planning Officers in August 2011, Hanson has produced an Environmental Statement to examine the impact of the proposal on the locality.

The Environmental Statement comprises a single document which is separated into 14 subsections covering the following areas:

Section 1-3 Framework of the statement setting out the background to the document.
The development proposals summary and supporting plans.
Non-technical summary of the specialist reports and supporting plans.

Section 4 - 14 Technical sections setting out detailed reports into the various issues considered in drawing together the development proposals.

The document has been compiled with contributions from Hanson's own professional staff, along with sections from several independent consultants engaged to provide their expert opinion on the impacts of the proposed development.

The statement should be read as a supporting document to the planning application, which makes several references to specific sections within it.

To avoid any unnecessary duplication of information, this supporting planning application statement contains the development proposal details, which have been designed to take into account the mitigating measures recommended in the EIA and general summaries of the findings of the technical reports.

Specific areas considered within the technical sections of the EIA are as follows:

*Landscape and Visual Impact	Section 4
*Ecology	Section 5
*Soils	Section 6
*Material assets	Section 7
*Cultural Heritage	Section 8
*Hydrogeology and Hydrology	Section 9
*Noise	Section 10
*Dust	Section 11
*Vibration	Section 12
*Transport	Section 13
*Consideration of alternatives	Section 14

In producing technical statements of this nature, The Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations recognise the need to produce a non-technical summary of the specialist reports. This document is included within Section 3 of the statement and is also available as a stand-alone document.

4.0 Existing Site Infrastructure

4.1 Site access

All mineral would leave the site by road. A purpose built surfaced entrance road was installed in 1987 and leads down to the A59.

It is proposed that on recommencement of mineral extraction and processing operations at the site all vehicles will continue to use this entrance.

A commitment was made as part of the original application process that HGV's leaving the site would not use the B6451 Otley road for mineral transportation.

The access road and any temporary crossings of Kex Gill road (prior to its diversion) would be subject to dust suppression measures and a regular cleaning regime in accordance with the planning permission for the site.

4.2 Transportation within the quarry

Under the approved method of working mineral is drilled, blasted and a face loading shovel operation in the extraction area would feed as-blasted rock to the crushing unit located in the extraction areas. The crushers process the mineral within the working phase to a size suitable for transportation by conveyor to the processing plant. The reinstated conveyor will pass under Kex Gill road via an existing culvert which was used when the site was last worked.

Waste mineral product (silt) from the processing operations was transported by pipeline to the silt settlement lagoons shown on the approved working plans, although originally this waste product was transported for disposal in the excavated areas by ground conveyor.

4.3 Screening works

The main processing plant and silos were 23 metres high and painted dark brown (please refer to photographs in appendix 7), The top section of the plant was visible above the screening mounds constructed around the processing plant area.

4 Telecom masts and associated compounds were built on the top of the plant site screen mound in 2000, the tallest of which is 13 metres high.

Condition 5 & 6 of the 1986 permission restricted the erection of buildings, plant and machinery without first obtaining the prior approval of the MPA.

The old plant was demolished in 2007 as it had become a serious health and safety concern with persistent trespassing since the site was mothballed.

The screening mounds were created around the processing plant and conveyor route and the slopes of these areas were subject to detailed ecological supervision whilst the heather re-establishment works were carried out (please refer to heather monitoring report in appendix 9).

Three areas of tree and shrub planting were approved and planted in compliance with condition 10 of the original planning permission and these areas are now well established.

5.0 Geology and Hydrogeology

5.1 Geology

Blubberhouses Quarry produces high quality silica sand by crushing and processing Carboniferous (Namurian) age, Hall Moor Sandstone from the Millstone Grit series.

The geology has been proven by extensive site investigation work undertaken in 1982, 1985 and 1990 and in total some 65 boreholes have been drilled in and around the site.

The drilling has proven that the workable sandstone is 6 to 18m thick and is gently dipping towards the north west. The sandstone overlain by up to 15m shale which is in turn overlain by boulder clay and peat up to 3m thick. The

overlying shale, clay and peat will all be stripped and retained on site for use in restoration.

5.2 Mineral Quality and Reserves

Under the current permission, 4.05Mt of planned reserves still remain at the site, all of which are suitable for producing high quality silica sand.

The silica sand is suitable for use in the manufacture of high quality, clear glass products.

A further 10 Mt of good quality sandstone suitable for producing silica sand has been proven beyond the currently permitted area which may be suitable for exploiting once the currently permitted reserves are exhausted.

5.3 Hydrogeology

The hydrogeology and hydrology of the area around Blubberhouses Quarry is discussed in more detail in Section 9 of the ES.

Twelve groundwater monitoring boreholes are in place around the permitted area. The boreholes indicate that the water table is within the sandstone or overlying shale and that dewatering will be required to work the deposit dry.

When the site was fully operational in the past, the workings were successfully dewatered without any detrimental impacts on the surrounding area.

Dewatered water, together with settled water used to wash the sand was discharged from settlement lagoons to Redshaw Gill under consent number WA 5886. Although this consent was revoked in September 1996, it would be our intention to apply to reinstate this consent with the same conditions if and when the site reopens.

The ecological report states that the SAC area to the west of the site is dependant upon surface water rather than groundwater for the maintenance of the blanket bog and upland heath vegetation. Therefore it is unlikely that dewatering will have any detrimental impact upon these systems. The new road development has the potential to disrupt the surface drainage, but water flow along any ditches and watercourses will be maintained by culverting under the road.

As part of the renewal of the permission and prior to the recommencement of mineral extraction and processing Hanson are prepared to carry out additional monitoring and design of mitigation strategies to ensure the site is able to be worked without impact to the water or sensitive surrounding ecological environment.

The site is outside any Flood Risk Assessment zones as designated by the Environment Agency and therefore is not at risk of flooding. As mentioned above, it is our intention to apply to reinstate the former discharge consent from the site and to operate within the conditions imposed by that consent. In which case, the water discharge should not cause any flooding issues in Redshaw Gill.

Based on the above, we believe that the proposed operations will have no detrimental impact on the surrounding water environment.

5.4 Geodiversity

Geodiversity forms an important part of Hanson's Environmental Management System. Sites with interesting geological features have a site specific Geodiversity Action Plan (GAP) which aims to record geological features and preserve them in situ where possible. Information about any interesting features is collected and can be used as an educational resource for members of the public and schools groups.

Whilst there is currently no site GAP for Blubberhouses, one will be developed once the site reopens. Our nearby Pateley Bridge quarry already has a site GAP and has a long history of hosting visits by school groups and members of the public and we would draw upon our experience there to offer similar opportunities at Blubberhouses.

The area around the proposed development has no known geological designations but is very scenic and the sandstone outcrops of Brandrith Crags and Raven Peak are popular with local rock climbers. However, the proposed development of Blubberhouses quarry is sufficiently far away or screened that it will have no detrimental impact upon these outcrops.

6.0 Approved working scheme

The working & restoration details submitted under condition 3 & 25 of C6/105/6A/PA were approved by North Yorkshire County Council on 10th September 1990 subject to the subsequent submission and approval of details of the landform and landscaping around the proposed lake area, and subsequent submission and approval of details of the siting and screening of the crushing unit within the quarry area.

The approved working proposals outlined the following 5 phases of development of the site as shown on the original plans (which have been included as part of this submission for ease of reference).

The aim of the approved scheme was to address the substantial variations in the thickness of overburden across the site and the management of silt slurry from the processing operations.

The series of silt lagoons as shown on the approved plans were expected to be contained by walls of insitu rock and/or overburden where practical.

Appendix 6 contains a letter and plan dated 13th December 1991 from NYCC indicated the current working area and confirmed the maximum extent of the working area (within phase 2) to east of Kex Gill road prior to diversion of the public highway.

The design of the development scheme has been left unaltered from the approved scheme in 1990 (as revised slightly by the above approval in 1991) however Hanson has made the commitment to prepare a revised restoration master plan and enter into a management plan with commitments to set up a management committee and carry out annual monitoring on grant of planning.

6.1 Working Plan A

Working Plan A, plan reference B168g/17a, indicates an overburden strip carried out to the north and north west sides of the working area.

Material realised from this strip was to be used to improve the screening of the northern plant area screening bund and directly in the creation of a bund at the southern end of Phase 1 in preparation for the future use of Phase 1 as a silt lagoon.

A small amount of peat/heather will be encountered and used to improve the surface of the western screening bank.

The Phase 1 minerals will be worked and lagoon A will continue to be used for silt disposal.

Peat, heather and overburden will be stripped from a small section of Phase 2 in the autumn (ie September), in preparation for the commencement of working of this area with soils in a dry and friable condition.

The peat and heather will be direct placed to improve the appearance of the northern stockpile and western section of the southern plant area screening bund.

Any surplus material will be stored in the peat/heather storage area number 1 on plan reference B168g/17a.

The material will be stored in accordance with the recommendations made by specialist ecological consultants.

Following placement, the autumn rain should aid establishment of the peat/heather storage mound surfaces. The overburden will be used in the creation of the bund at the southern end of Phase 1.

The peat/heather will be stripped by backactor and transported to the direct placement sites or storage areas by dump truck

In the case of direct placement the turves will be turned by hand, this method was used successfully during the strips in the late 1980's.

In respect of the storage areas the material will be unloaded and subsequently pushed gently into shape by a front loader.

The peat/heather storage area number 1 will be added to progressively from subsequent peat/heather strips.

The treatment of the peat/heather is considered within the ecological assessment prepared as part of the environmental Statement.

In preparation for working on the east side of Kex Gill Road an access point will be cut through the screening mound to the east of the current working area and adjacent to Kex Gill Road.

Material removed from this area will be used in the construction of the bund at the southern end of phase 1.

Measures to reinforce the surface of Kex Gill Road at the proposed crossing point will be undertaken. Kex Gill Road diversion will be constructed.

6.2. Working Plan B

Part of Phase 2 will be prepared for working to take advantage of the dry conditions of the soils. Working of Phase 1 will cease and workings will transfer to the east side of Kex Gill Road.

The southern third of Phase 2 will be worked in a west-east direction as indicated on plan reference B168g/18a.

By working in this direction advantage will be taken of the surrounding topography in screening workings from views from the east.

Silica sand extracted from phase 2 will be transported by dump truck from the active working area across Kex Gill Road to the primary crusher. Haul routes during Phase 2 will be restricted to the floor of the working area as illustrated on plan reference B168g/18a and B168g/19a.

Consequently until the new route for Kex Gill Road has been constructed advanced warning signs and cleaning regime of the crossing point for heavy plant to the crushing and conveyor hopper location will be agreed with the Highways and MPA.

Prior to the cessation of working in the initial workings of Phase 2 the new route of part of Kex Gill Road will be constructed and the existing route will be closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Trees will be planted when the existing Kex Gill Road becomes redundant where it cuts through the plantation.

Once the initial Phase 2 working area has been worked out and the road diverted, workings will be reoriented to pursue a south-north direction with the exception of the eastern section of Phase 2.

The peat/heather stripped from Phase 2 will be stored in the peat/heather storage area number 1 shown on plan reference B168g/18a.

The overburden will be used within Phase 2 to create an additional silt lagoon bund.

During the working of Phase 2 silt disposal will be transferred from Lagoon A to Lagoon B.

Overburden removed from Phase 2 will be placed within Phase 2 as illustrated on plan reference B168g/18a to create the bund walls of a future silt lagoon.

Peat/heather from the final section of Phase 2 will be stripped and stored within peat/heather storage area number 2.

The precise position of the storage mounds will be agreed on site in conjunction with Ecological consultants and the MPA as storage area 2 as shown on the approved working plans is outside of the planning permission boundary but within SPA boundary.

Hanson will avoid this area and a new location will be agreed with statutory bodies prior to recommencement of working.

Silica sand will be worked in a west-east direction. By this time Lagoon B will have reached capacity and silt disposal will be transferred to Lagoon C.

6.3. Working Plan C

The final section of Phase 2 will be being worked whilst preparation works for Phase 3 are being undertaken.

Peat/heather stripped from the western half of Phase 3 as illustrated on plan reference B168g/19a was to be placed in temporary storage within peat/heather storage area number 2 whilst overburden removed from this area will be used in part in the completion of the Lagoon C bunds and restoration of the western screen bank and Lagoon A which will have had sufficient time to dry out.

Phase 3 will be worked in a west-east direction continuing to use Lagoon C for silt disposal.

Silica sand will be transported to the primary crusher via the haul road indicated on plan reference B168g/20a.

6.4. Working Plan D

The second section of Phase 3 will be stripped and the peat/heather will be used in final restoration of the western screen bank and former lagoon A area.

The overburden will be used in the restoration of Lagoon B and the eastern section of Phase 2 as illustrated on plan reference B168g/20a.

Peat/heather material will be taken out of storage and used in final restoration over the former lagoon B area and the eastern section of Phase 2.

At this stage in the development measures will be taken to relocate the crusher and site it between Phases 4 and 5.

The crusher will be located on the quarry floor to minimise the potential for dust, noise and landscape impact. The specific location of the crusher and internal haul routes to be agreed with the MPA prior to relocation.

Phase 3 will continue to be worked in a west-east direction.

Towards the end of this working phase peat/heather and overburden will be stripped from the southerly end of Phase 4 as illustrated on plan reference B168g/20a.

The peat/heather will be used direct to supplement the restoration of the eastern section of Phase 2. The overburden will be used to improve the

restoration of the northern part of the eastern section of Phase 2 and peat/heather taken out of storage will be subsequently placed over the landform for final restoration.

Working of Phase 4 will commence in the south east corner of the phase proceeding in a east-west direction. Once this initial area has been established the direction of working will be reoriented to a northerly direction.

At the commencement of working in Phase 4 silt disposal will be transferred from Lagoon C to Lagoon D.

6.5. Working Plan E

Peat/heather from a proportion of Phase 4 will be stripped and placed in storage in either area 1 or 2 depending on which material has been taken out of storage for earlier restoration. The overburden will be used partly in the restoration of Lagoon C and partly in the restoration of Phase 4.

Once the final restoration contours in this area have been achieved peat/heather will be direct placed from Phase 4 and supplemented with material taken out of storage and used in the final restoration of the Lagoon C area.

Whilst working Phase 4 Lagoon D will be used.

Lagoon E will be created from overburden from Phase 4 in a similar manner to Phase 2 and Lagoon C and overburden from Phase 4 will be placed in the working area of Phase 4 in final restoration.

During this working phase the crusher will be operational in a new location.

The eastern section of Phase 5 will be stripped as shown on plan reference B168g/21a. The peat/heather will be used in final restoration of Phase 4. The overburden will be used in the restoration of the northern section of Phase 4. Peat/heather will subsequently be taken out of storage and used in the final restoration of Phase 4.

Working of Phase 5 will commence using Lagoon E. Peat/heather will be used in restoration of Phase 4 supplemented with material taken from storage and the overburden from Phase 5 will be used in the restoration of Lagoon D.

Phase 5 will be worked in a clockwise direction. Steep overburden slopes will be left around the limit of working on the western side of Phase 5.

At the cessation of working of phase 5 the overburden will be stripped and graded and placed over Lagoon E.

Peat will be taken out of storage and used in the final restoration of Phase 5 and Lagoon E.

6.6 Final site restoration

The currently approved restoration proposals for the mineral extraction and plant site are shown on Plan ref B168g/22a and W82/365/EA66.

As part of the original application detailed consideration was given to the careful handling, placement and re-establishment of the heather moorland areas to ensure the site would be returned successfully to a productive grouse moor.

Overburden which is made up of peat, mudstone and boulder clay is insufficient to fully return all the extraction areas to moorland and a lake area was proposed in the northern part of the site which would provide a habitat feature to compliment the undulating moorland landscape proposed on restoration.

Annual monitoring reports on the heather restoration were produced upto 1996 with an update summary prepared in October 2001 (Please refer to Appendix 9- Final monitoring report: 10 years of Moorland Restoration - October 2001).

A further update assessment has been made as part of the ecological assessment contained within the Environmental statement.

Prior to the recommencement of mineral extraction a revised restoration plan will be prepared which takes account of the breeding bird and wildlife interest that has resulted from the site being left in a mothballed condition. Liaison through the management committee with interest groups would aim to provide a plan that has diverse habitat areas across parts of the site.

As part of the revised proposals for the restoration scheme, which will be submitted prior to the recommencement of mineral activities Hanson will use the "soil with turf fragment" technique to restore large areas back to heather moorland with the use of turves as carried out limited to transferring particular species e.g. cotton grasses into specific habitat areas. The heather seed bank of the upper peat layer is significant and this is seen by the regeneration following burning.

The restoration scheme could provide opportunities for creation of a more diverse moorland landscape. Small scale manipulation of slopes and variation in sub-soil depth and compaction will allow wetter hollows to be created and use of small clay banded areas in sequence downslope with a watercourse will allow creation of deeper mire areas with bog pools colonised with common cotton grass.

Other habitats that will be created through manipulating sub-soil and peat depths will include shallow water areas with scrapes set in exposed mineral with draw down margins.

The ecological and habitat enhancement would be designed in collaboration with and supervised by a soils and restoration specialist having discussed the ideas through the management committee and with the approval of the MPA.

A Section 106 agreement also provides a mechanism for a series of regular management plans to be prepared and approved for the quarry both during and on cessation of quarry operations. The management plans will seek to ensure that the elements of mitigation, compensation and enhancement required due to the sites sensitive surroundings are established and managed in the long term.

A 20 year aftercare management period following restoration of the site will ensure that significant consideration is given to nature conservation and biodiversity targets.

The management plans will be discussed and agreed with the management committee which Hanson would hope could contain representatives of the landowners, NYCC, the AONB and other interested bodies and wildlife groups such as the Wharfedale Naturalists Society and the Washburn Wildlife Advisory Group.

Whilst Hanson currently have in-house expertise who through liaison with its specialist ecological consultants are confident that the site will be restored to beneficial afteruse the length of the permission and subsequent extended management period will require a commitment made through the section 106 agreement to provide and/or fund expertise on the restoration and management of the restoration process and subsequent management and liaison with the Estate as landowners and local interest groups.

This expertise may with the agreement of the management committee be the use of in-house or external consultants or combination thereof or alternatively expertise from within the management committee and or suitable local interest group.

As part of the management plan process ecological monitoring of the site will be carried out and will recommence on grant of planning permission. Once the site is operational and restoration commences then monitoring of the restoration will continue throughout the extended management plan period.

Whilst operational and during restoration and the extended management period annual reports on the work undertaken and proposals for further work will be submitted to the MPA for approval.

7.0 Environmental considerations and mitigating measures

7.1 Landscape and visual amenity

Blubberhouses Quarry is located entirely within the Nidderdale AONB and 1.4km to the east of the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary. It is therefore recognised as lying in a highly sensitive landscape. The site is also located adjacent to and partly within the North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (also referred to as Natura 2000 sites).

As a consequence landscape and visual effects were a key consideration alongside ecology.

The Landscape and visual impact assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment prepared jointly by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment Second Edition 2002.

A review of the original planning application, the approved working plans and the annual heather restoration monitoring reports has been carried out as well as a review of the information submitted as part of the original public enquiry.

Site visits were undertaken and a photographic viewpoint assessment carried out from key viewpoints and principal receptors. Key viewpoints are presented as photo plates together with other supporting plans to illustrate landscape character, topography and the zone of visual influence (ZVI). The ZVI was generated with 3d topographic data to identify the visual effects (worse case) of the quarrying activities from surrounding areas. Site checks were then used to identify existing screening at eye level afforded by intervening stonewalls, trees, buildings and structures.

Additional mitigation measures to ameliorate any significant adverse impacts have been considered in the report. These mitigation measures will be included as an integral part of the quarry development or will form ongoing good practice.

7.2 Ecology & Soils

The majority of the undisturbed land within the planning permission area is a managed grouse moor and so the patchwork of habitats is always changing and comprises largely blocks of 90%+ heather of various ages. Management of these areas is by rotational burning and so ecological interest is limited in extent as a result of this.

A desk study for known information from NEYEDC and websites MAGIC and NBN gateway has been carried out as part of the EIA.

A number of statutory sites border the permission area including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area for Conservation and a Special Protection Area for Birds.

A range of surveys have been undertaken including Winter birds, Breeding birds and vantage point surveys for birds. These surveys were extended outside the boundaries of the planning permission area and on the west side into the SPA.

Vantage point surveys have provided information on use of the site by birds from the SPA. Additional fieldwork have included Phase 1 vegetation survey and targeted NVC survey.

Reptile and great crested newt surveys together with surveys for bats and walkover for water vole/otter and sampling for invertebrates have also taken place and form part of the ecological assessment.

The EclA has assessed the impacts and will provide measures to avoid/reduce or mitigate those impacts. It is also proposed that a management plan for land within the planning permission area will be prepared in consultation with landowners and statutory bodies.

A agricultural land quality survey has been undertaken however, there will not be any "best and most versatile" (BMV) land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) within the site, however consideration has been to the particular requirements for the handling, storage and use of the peat and peat soils that will be recovered and used in restoration at the site.

7.3 Hydrogeology and hydrology

As set out in section 5.3 detailed consideration was given to the management of water from mineral processing and extraction and disposal of silt as part of the original application and enquiry process and subsequent variations to the approved scheme.

Conditions were imposed in the planning permission and discharge consent to satisfy the requirements of Yorkshire Water and the National Rivers Authority at the time.

A review of groundwater and surface water conditions has been carried out following a review of published and site specific data.

As part of the renewal of the permission and prior to the recommencement of mineral extraction and processing Hanson are prepared to carry out additional monitoring and design of mitigation strategies to ensure the site is worked without impact to the water or sensitive surrounding ecological environment.

Any mitigation measures would be developed in accordance with the EA (and if applicable Yorkshire Water) guidance to ensure that development of the site would not cause derogation of water quality or resources.

7.4 Noise

The screening mounds around the plant site area and extraction areas and the use of conveyor routes will help to ensure that noise generated within the site.

A review of the data produced for the original application has been carried out and an assessment of noise generating activities at the site in relation to nearby properties.

With the exception that all machinery will be fitted with silencers there are no other noise limits set out within existing planning consent ref C6/105/6A/PA.

The assessment contained within the Environmental statement confirms that the proposed development will be able to operate within modern planning limits subject to the measures outlined within the report.

Additional periodic monitoring could also be undertaken if required on recommencement of mineral extraction.

7.5 Dust

Dust would be controlled in accordance with the existing planning conditions at the site.

Extensive dust control measures were in place on the original plant however as this plant has now been demolished and the conveyor routes removed.

An updated dust assessment has been carried out as part of the submission of plant detail as required under conditions attached to the planning permission.

The assessment has reviewed the historic management methods, and monitoring procedures and operating standards it has also assessed the need for additional mitigation measures for the mineral extraction areas, the mobile crushers and the plant site in the event the silica sand extraction and production recommenced.

The report confirms that given the intended dust control measures the site can be operated with minimal impact on nearby properties.

7.6 Blasting and vibration

A vibration assessment was carried out for the original quarry operation and conditions were imposed in respect of blasting operations on inhabited buildings and the structure of the dam at Thruscross reservoir.

Blasting is required at the site to loosen the rock from the quarry face, to enable the crushing and subsequent processing of the material to take place.

As extraction takes place within different phases of the permitted extraction area, the potential impacts would be experienced at different receptors and as such new monitoring and assessment work will be carried out.

A further assessment has been carried out to review any historic monitoring data at nearby receptors.

A review of limits within the existing consent has also been undertaken and confirms that in the event that recommencement of operations takes place during the extended planning permission period the site can operate within the limits set out in national planning and environmental guidance.

7.7 Highways & rights of way

The existing road infrastructure is already in place to serve the site and earlier Kex Gill road diversion discussions had progressed to an advanced stage.

The existing planning permission restricts the amount of saleable product leaving the site to 250,000 tonnes per year. It also restricts use of the site to silica sand production only as well as restricting importation of waste material or other minerals.

The original site establishment work provided a new road from the A59 and quarry entrance and in the event that the site recommenced operations this would remain as the quarry access to the A59.

The access road is surfaced and would be subject to a regular cleaning regime.

Given the restriction on tonnage from the site, the renewal of the existing planning permission does not seek to increase the volume of traffic using the quarry.

Other than the diversion of Kex Gill Road no alterations are required to the existing highway network and there are no proposals to alter traffic routes. Hanson would continue to avoid using the B6451 Oltey Road as set out

originally in the Secretary of State's Findings of Fact which formed part of the enquiry into the original application.

All loaded HGV's leaving the site would be sheeted and clean in accordance with Hanson's Environmental Management System requirements.

A HGV code of conduct and the quarry liaison group would be set up to ensure for residents living nearby to report any specific concerns from HGV's travelling from the site along the A59.

Kex Gill Road which would be subject to diversion as part of the permitted development proposals runs north-south, effectively through the centre of the planned reserve.

On completion of the road diversion to the west of the permission boundary a section of the old road was to become an extension to the bridleway which runs along the southern boundary of the planning permission.

The stopping up and diversion of Kex Gill Road will require renewed liaison with highways and footpaths officers as the diversion had reached an advance stage prior to the mothballing the site 1991.

Prior to any works commencing on site the detail on the type of surface, and drainage measures for the new road and bridleway route will need be agreed.

The original conveyor culvert under Kex Gill road will be used to transport mineral from the extraction area under the bridleway to the processing plant area with crossings restricted to face extraction machinery such as a front loading shovel movements at the beginning and end of each working day as this plant and machinery is likely to be stored within the processing plant site area for security.

Footpath No 15.14/3 crosses within the north west corner of the planning permission area.

The Kex Gill Road diversion will cross this public footpath and liaison will take place with the relevant footpaths officer and user groups in terms of temporary closure to the footpath while the road is constructed and appropriate surfacing and any landscaping/fencing works to ensure safety to member of the public at any crossing points.

Through the development of the proposed management plan and revised restoration plan access opportunities will be discussed and agreed with interested parties for defined viewpoints and Geo & Biodiversity interpretation areas both during and after completion of mineral extraction.

The restoration proposals and management plans will have regard to national trail routes such as the Dales Way and the surrounding open access land.

7.8 Archaeology

A cultural heritage assessment has been carried out as part of the EIA and in accordance with PPS 5 and other relevant planning policy. This has included a review of designations, known data for the site and its environs and readily available aerial photographs and satellite imagery.

As the majority of the undisturbed land within the planning permission area is managed grouse moor a site walk over survey has taken place.

The information gathered from the desk-based assessment and site walkover has demonstrated the likelihood of discrete archaeological sites, most probably of Mesolithic date, being present within the permitted area. However, it has also shown that the identification of such sites is not possible without burning off the heather to expose the soil surface.

The EIA has assessed the potential effects of the scheme upon archaeological and cultural heritage assets within the development site and its environs and has proposed a mitigation strategy which would provide a method of recording and excavating the archaeology present in advance of development.

7.8 Additional mitigation measures & environmental commitments following the Environmental Impact Assessment Process

- Peat/heather storage area 2 (as shown on the approved working plans) is outside of the planning permission boundary but within SPA boundary. Hanson will avoid this area and a new location will be agreed with statutory bodies prior to recommencement of working.
- Construction of additional screen mounds to limit visibility of working phases along the eastern boundary.
- Improvement to the restoration plan incorporating further diversity of habitats such as bare ground, small pools and additional woodland & scrub planting to form a transitional zone between the moorland and lower lying areas.
- Proposed establishment of a management committee which Hanson would hope could contain representatives of the landowners, NYCC, the AONB and other interested bodies and wildlife groups such as the Wharfedale Naturalists Society and the Washburn Wildlife Advisory Group.
- Production of Habitat Management Plans for the duration of the planning permission and 20 year extended management period beyond final restoration.
- Through the development of the management plans and revised restoration plan access opportunities will be discussed and agreed with interested parties for defined viewpoints and Geo & Biodiversity interpretation areas both during and after completion of mineral extraction.
- Reinstatement and repair of stone walls and gates in disrepair within site boundary immediately.
- Additional woodland planting to further screen plant site area and provide a softening edge to the plant site screen bund.
- Establishment of a local liaison groups which will meet at least yearly, with the frequency of meetings increasing on recommencement of site operations.

8.0 Sales and Need

8,1 Sales and Need

The Hanson Industrial Sands business currently operates sites at Reigate in Surrey and Wrotham in Kent.

When the Blubberhouses site first operated its aim was to compete in the English colourless container "flint" glass and the industrial sand market into chemical works which were at the time supplied by quarries in Norfolk, Surrey and Staffordshire.

In England only the Sibelco operations at North Park in Surrey, Kings Lynn in Norfolk and formerly Moneystone quarry in Staffordshire (now closed) and the Hanson Reigate (Park Pit) in Surrey have had sufficiently high grade (low iron) sand after processing to supply the flint glass (colourless container) manufacturers.

Blubberhouses would therefore be one of a very small number of quarries in England that has the raw chemistry and an existing planning permission to produce the flint glass sand.

Appendix 4 contains a Mineral Planning Factsheet prepared by Communities and Local Government & the BGS in 2009, in which the Blubberhouses site is referred.

This factsheet provides an overview of the current silica sand supply in the UK and provides some background information on the market, supply consumption, value, reserves & resources as well as detail on the different processing and enhancing techniques required.

Silica sands are sparsely distributed within the UK and are considered in Government policy to be a mineral of national importance. National policy emphasizes the scarcity of silica sand and its importance to a wide range of industries that supply the economy with consumer goods and equipment.

The Inspectors report of 1985 which followed a local inquiry into the original Blubberhouses application stated : "Although the known resources of silica sand ,with or without planning permission., could provide a supply to the flint glass industry into the next century and even though there is overcapacity today, taking into account all the wide ranging issues covered in this report, I consider the advantages of a alternative and regular supply of a good quality sand to as relatively close and important manufacturing industry which is under competitive pressure and the establishment of a new and significant source of local employment does justify a planning permission at Blubberhouses".

The Department of Trade and Industry commented in the Inspectors report that the most important factor in considering the grant of planning permission is the promotion of competition because of the benefits that it can bring in terms of economic efficiency, greater choice, lower prices and better service for consumers.

The grant of planning permission for the renewal at Blubberhouses would give sufficient security for Hanson to develop its industrial sands business.

A 25 year renewal to the existing permission would give security of investment on the high cost of a new processing plant and machinery, and also provide security of supply to local glass manufacturers to enable them to benefit from a new source of sand in the market.

Output levels are restricted to 250,000 tonnes pa and original market estimates indicated a sales designation split consisting of approx 60% of vehicles travelling east along the A59 and 40% to the west.

Based on the past, current, and potential customer bases identified in the glass and industrial sand market these figures are likely to remain similar once the site has re-established itself in the market place.

Most silica sand is transported by lorry and bulk tanker in the UK. Hanson's Reigate operation in Surrey currently supplies industrial chemical plants at Warrington and Matlock in Derbyshire. The Reigate operation has in the past also supplied a glass manufacturer in Yorkshire by road.

A rail link at the Sibelco's Kings Lynn operation in Norfolk allows sand to be transported to glass manufactures in Doncaster and Barnsley but significant volumes of silica sand are still transported to glass and industrial chemical works by lorry and bulk tanker across the UK.

The Blubberhouses deposit is closer to the core north of England manufacturing plants than existing supplies, as such there could be potential savings to some of the other glass manufacturers based in South and West Yorkshire and in the North West in transport costs and wider environmental benefits in terms of reduction of HGV road miles.

The difficulty in securing scarce geological resources in sufficient quantities to justify the high cost of investment of a new plant is widely acknowledged but with the planned and unplanned reserves that exist at the site coupled with our long established customer base across the UK Hanson is confident that it will develop the Blubberhouses site as a important long term supplier of Silica sand to the glass and industrial sands market.

9.0 Site Operation

9.1 Employment

Under the proposals submitted for the original application the quarry was to provide employment for 47 people when the processing plant reached full production. This included 23 plant and quarry staff and 9 office staff, and 15 drivers. These numbers were assessed and reviewed as part of the inquiry carried out by the Secretary of State at the time.

Employment numbers will be confirmed on recommencement of mineral extraction and processing operations, as plant and machinery advances have reduced the numbers of people required in modern operations.

Additionally however the quarry would generate employment for skilled contractors required to provide specialist services e.g. electricians and

contractors involved in machinery repair and maintenance plant hire, earth moving and landscaping.

9.2 Hours of Working

On recommencement of operations Hanson would propose to operate the site in accordance with the hours of working permitted under condition 8 and 9 of consent ref C6/105/6A/PA.

The current planning permission restricts quarrying and transport of mineral from the site to within the hours of 7am to 6pm Monday to Saturdays. The original permission permits continuous (24 hours) operation of the processing plant site area.

It also states that, with the exception of essential maintenance to the plant and machinery used on site, no operations (quarrying and transport) would take place outside the above hours or Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Under condition 18 blasting is permitted to be carried out between 0900 and 1600 hours Mondays to Fridays.

The operating hours enabled the site to meet the needs of the glass manufacturing market it served.

The need for continuous working of the processing plant will be reviewed as part of the design for any new processing plant.

10.0 Policy Background

Planning policy for this application is principally governed by the North Yorkshire Minerals Local Plan (NYMLP), which was adopted in December 1997.

In September 2007 a number of policies contained in the mineral local plan were saved by the Secretary of State's Direction under Para 1(3) of schedule 8 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 until policies being developed in the Minerals and Waste Development Framework supersede them.

The Minerals Core Strategy which forms part of the North Yorkshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework (MWDF) sets out a new approach to minerals development, within the plan area.

Once adopted the Minerals Core Strategy, along with other documents in the MWDF, will form a key part of the development plan, used to help guide decisions on planning applications for the period up to 2030.

Hanson has made submissions at various stages of the North Yorkshire County Council MWDF process and these submissions consistently confirmed the strategic importance of the planned reserve and the need for the County to maintain its Silica Sand land bank reserve in line with National planning policy.

The Minerals Core Strategy Issues Consultation document states that the resource at and around the dormant site at Blubberhouses may need to be safeguarded for future use.

This application seeks only to renew the existing planning permission and does not seek to extend the lateral footprint of the existing planning permission area.

Any proposals or safeguarding allocations in the MWDF of unplanned reserves beyond the life of the existing planning permission and the end of the framework period in 2030 will need careful consideration of National planning policy and liaison with statutory and non statutory bodies.

As part of the EIA process Hanson and its consultants have also had regard to the Harrogate District Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2009) and relevant 'saved' Policies of the Harrogate District Local Plan (2001).

MPS 1, 2 provided the national perspective on mineral development however significant changes in the planning system are taking place with consultation on the National planning framework ongoing.

The above policy guidance has been incorporated into the development proposal and best practice principles used in the EIA process.

National guidance states that there is a strong presumption against mineral working in AONBs, although the guidance also states that Minerals Planning Authorities should ensure reserves of silica sand should be protected.

MPS 1 requires mineral applications in an AONB to be subject to careful assessment.

The Inspectors report for the original application states that no authorities or organisations with a countryside interest objected to the application.

The acceptability of the scheme on visual appearance and landscape grounds has been and will be a key objective as detailed in section 4 of the Environmental Statement.

An ecological assessment is contained within section 5 of the ES and has been prepared taking account of the comments received from statutory and non statutory consultees received during the scoping process.

Minerals Planning Guidance 15 *Provision of Silica sand in England* states that silica sand is a scarce resource of national importance and those deposits should be safeguarded.

The Blubberhouses site has 4m/t of proven planned silica sand reserves and government guidance states that extensions to existing sites may be preferable to extract all available reserves, rather than to allow workings on greenfield sites however this shouldn't restrict competition in the market.

The renewal of the existing permission at Blubberhouses would allow sufficient time for planned reserves to be worked and it would also provide a new and long-term source of supply into the market that could easily reach

the important container glass and chemical manufacturers in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and the North West.

Government policy permits the working of silica sand in some designated areas but only in exceptional circumstances and that the operator should demonstrate it is taking all practical steps to satisfy environmental concerns.

Hanson has proposed to work with statutory and non statutory organisations to design a revised restoration plan prior to recommencement of mineral extraction operations and to provide a management plans both during and for an extended aftercare period through a legal agreement.

Section 14 of the environmental statement provides further information on the consideration of alternatives to the renewal of the time limited permission at Blubberhouses

Hanson considers that as a result of the EIA assessment process and the recommendations made by its specialist consultants that appropriate mitigation has been proposed to deal with the potential impacts of the proposal on the AONB and surrounding environmental designations.

11.0 Summary

Blubberhouses Quarry is a silica sand deposit located halfway between Harrogate and Skipton, just off the A59.

The processing plant was established and mineral extraction commenced in 1987. The site was operational until 1991 and has since been mothballed with significant planned reserves (4.05m/t) remaining un-worked.

Planning permission C6/105/6A/PA dated 27th January 1986 authorises mineral extraction at the site until 31st December 2011 and this application and environmental statement seeks the renewal of the permission for a further 25 years.

Whilst there are no immediate plans to recommence silica sand extraction, the site forms a strategically important planned reserve for Hanson's silica sand business and expectations are that mineral working will take place during the proposed time extension period.

The site's permitted hours of operation will remain as per those defined in the existing planning permission and extraction methods, output levels and access to and from the site will also remain the same.

The development of a new processing plant and associated infrastructure such as the re-establishment of conveyor routes and mobile crushing unit located within the extraction phases will be designed and submitted for approval prior to recommencement of working.

Any new plant will be no higher than the approved processing plant which was erected in 1986 (and demolished in 2007 due to health and safety concerns once the site had been mothballed).

Blubberhouses Quarry is located entirely within the Nidderdale AONB and approximately 1.4km east of the Yorkshire Dales National Park boundary. The site is also located adjacent to the North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (also referred to as Natura 2000 sites).

Detailed designs on progressive heather moorland restoration for the site were prepared as part of the original permission and the majority of the site would be restored to a productive grouse moor with careful storage and restoration of the heather moorland.

The design of the working and restoration plans submitted in this application has been left unaltered from the approved scheme however Hanson has made a commitment to prepare, prior to recommencement of mineral extraction, a revised restoration masterplan to increase the potential for habitat and wildlife gains.

It has also outlined possible additional mitigation measures and possible changes to the approved scheme as a result of the recommendations and

findings from the environmental impact assessment process which has accompanied this renewal application.

As part of the revised restoration proposals Hanson would propose to use the "soil with turf fragment" technique to restore large areas back to heather moorland with the use of "turves" (as carried out historically) limited to transferring particular species e.g. cotton grasses into specific habitat areas.

There will also be an opportunity to re-design the restoration to include opportunities for creation of a more diverse moorland landscape through incorporation of features that are restricted currently to the areas that have been worked but not restored e.g. shallow water areas with bare scrapes and draw down margins and features that are currently limited in extent e.g. bog pools with *Sphagnum* and common cotton grass and a transitional zone of scrubby woodland along valley features.

On grant of planning permission Hanson will enter into a commitment to prepare a management plan for the life of the planning permission and for a 20 year period beyond the final restoration of the site.

Hanson will also set up a management committee and local liaison groups which will meet at least yearly, with the frequency of meetings increasing on recommencement of site operations or when specific areas are to be stripped and /or restored.

The renewal of the existing permission at Blubberhouses would allow sufficient time for planned reserves to be worked and it would also provide a new and long-term source of supply into the market that could easily reach the important container glass and chemical manufacturers in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and sites across the North West.

A 25 year renewal to the existing permission would also ensure security for investment in the high cost of a new processing plant and machinery, and provide security of supply to local glass and chemical manufacturers to enable them to benefit from a new source of sand into the market.