

May 2023



## **Initial (RAG) Assessment of the Suitability of Nominated Land to the South and West of Hermitage Quarry for Hard Rock**

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**Site name:** Land to the South and West of Hermitage Quarry

**Proposed Development:** Extraction of Hard Rock of the Limestone Hythe Formation (Kentish Ragstone)

**Site Location:** Hermitage Quarry, Hermitage Lane, Aylesford, Kent, ME16 9NT

**Grid Reference:** Approximately centred on TQ 70745 55403

**District/Borough Council:** Tonbridge and Malling Borough (northern part of the site) and Maidstone Borough (southern part)

**Parish:** East Malling and Larkfield Parish and Ditton Parish (in Tonbridge and Malling Borough). The southern part of the site falls within Barming Parish in Maidstone Borough.

**Site Area:** The site covers an area of 96 hectares from within which an area of up to 64 hectares could be worked subject to detailed technical assessment

**Estimated Mineral Reserve:** Circa 20 million tonnes of Ragstone Hard Rock

**Annual output:** Circa 0.9mtpa

**Yield:** Potential maximum 20 million tonnes - this will be influenced by planning constraints and appropriate stand-offs from sensitive land uses

**Existing Land Use:** Woodland and meadow

**Proposed Restoration:** The land would be restored to original levels with inert restoration materials (circa 500,000 tonnes per annum) and returned to mixed native woodland and meadow, subject to biodiversity net gain requirements.

May 2023

**Summary of Assessment**

Green Belt	Green
Airport Safeguarding Zones	Green
Cumulative Impacts	Amber-Green
Health and Amenity	Red-Amber
Services and Utilities	Red-Amber
Transport (Including Access)	Amber
Public Rights of Way (PROW)	Red-Amber
Soil Quality	Amber
Air Quality	Amber
Water Environment (including flooding)	Amber - Green
Historic Environment	Amber-Green
Nature Conservation and Geodiversity	Red-Amber
Landscape Designations/Visual Impact	Amber - Green

May 2023

**Full RAG Assessment**

The text that is considered to most accurately reflect the assessment of this site is shown in bold and underlined with larger font.

Opportunity/Constraint	RED	RED-AMBER	AMBER	AMBER-GREEN	GREEN	Information Source
<p><b>Landscape Designations/Visual Impact</b></p> <p>The significance of any landscape and visual impact is dependent on a number of factors, such as the proximity to sensitive viewpoints, presence of screening features, direct effect on landscape fabric, existing landforms and the proximity to Kent's landscape designations of national importance.</p> <p>Kent has two nationally important landscape designations: The Kent Downs and the High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).</p>	<p>The site is in the AONB, there are no exceptional circumstances and the development cannot be demonstrated to be in the public interest.</p>	<p>The site is in the AONB but there may be exceptional circumstances and it may be in the public interest.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to or within the setting of the AONB and could have a major adverse impact on the landscape designation that could require high level mitigation.</p> <p>The site falls outside the AONB and could have a major adverse impact on the landscape that could be difficult to mitigate.</p> <p>The site is considered to have a major impact upon local sensitivity receptors.</p>	<p>The site is in the AONB, and there are exceptional circumstances and it is in the public interest but it could have an adverse impact on the landscape designation.</p> <p>The site is adjacent or within the setting of an AONB and could have a moderate adverse impact on the landscape designation, that could require medium level mitigation.</p> <p>The site falls outside the AONB and could have a moderate adverse impact on the landscape that</p>	<p>The site is in the AONB, and there are exceptional circumstances and it is in the public interest but it could have an adverse impact on the landscape designation.</p> <p>The site is adjacent or within the setting of an AONB and could have a minor adverse impact on the landscape designation, that could require low level mitigation.</p> <p>The site falls outside the AONB and could have a minor adverse impact upon the local landscape that could require</p>	<p>The site is not within the AONB or its setting and would have no impact on the landscape designation.</p> <p>The site falls outside the AONB and could have a very minor impact on the landscape designation that could be addressed with mitigation.</p> <p>The site is considered to have no impact upon local sensitivity receptors.</p>	<p>GIS Data</p> <p>The Kent Landscape Assessment Parts 1 and 2 (2003)</p> <p>Landscape character area design guidance (Kent Downs AONB &amp; High Weald AONB)</p> <p>Consultation with landscape specialists.</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

			could require medium level mitigation.  The site is considered to have a moderate impact upon local landscape.	low level mitigation.  <b><u>The site is considered to have a minor adverse impact upon local landscape.</u></b>		
<p><b>Nature Conservation and Geodiversity</b></p> <p>Proximity to international designations. E.g., SAC, SPA, Ramsar.</p> <p>Proximity to national designations. E.g. SSSI, National Nature Reserve, Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Proximity to Local Designations E.g Regionally important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RCIS), Local Wildlife Sites, SNCI, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitats. Potential for enhancement of local designations can be taken into account.</p>	<p>The site is likely to have a significant effect on international designations but mitigation measures are not available.</p> <p>Site is within or could have unacceptable adverse impact on national designations where there is no evidence that the benefits of the development outweigh the impacts.</p> <p>Impact likely to be severe.</p>	<p>The site is likely to have a significant effect on international designations, mitigation measures are available but are of a nature which means they may not be deliverable.</p> <p><b><u>Site is within or could have unacceptable adverse impact on national designations where there is no persuasive evidence that the benefits of the development</u></b></p>	<p>The site is likely to have a significant effect on international designations, mitigation measures are possible but not included in the proposal.</p> <p>Site is within or could have unacceptable adverse impact on national designations but there is persuasive evidence that the benefits of the development outweigh the impacts.</p>	<p>The site could potentially impact international designations and mitigation measures are included in the proposal which are sufficient enough to avoid a likely significant effect.</p> <p>The site is unlikely to have an unacceptable impact on local designations. Impacts could be addressed with mitigation.</p> <p>Impact likely to be minor.</p>	<p>The site is not likely to have a significant effect on international, national or local designations.</p> <p>The site is considered to have no impact upon local sensitivity receptors.</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Consultation with Natural England and biodiversity officers</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

<p>With all designations the proximity, perceived adverse impacts and the potential for mitigation should be considered.</p> <p>Oaken Wood SSSI is located just within the southwest of the site boundary. A significant part of the site is designated Ancient Woodland.</p> <p>Site is within a Local Wildlife Site.</p>		<p><b><u>outweigh the impacts.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Site is within or could have unacceptable adverse impact on local designations where there is no evidence the impacts can be mitigated or compensated such that there is net benefit.</u></b></p> <p>Impact is likely to be severe to moderate.</p> <p><b><u>The site is considered to have a significant adverse effect on national designations.</u></b></p>	<p>Site is within or could have unacceptable adverse impact on local designations but there is persuasive evidence that the impacts can be mitigated or compensated such that there is net benefit.</p> <p>Impact is likely to be severe to moderate.</p>	<p>The site is considered to have a minor impact upon local sensitivity receptors</p>		
<p><b>Historic Environment</b></p> <p>Proximity to Kent's heritage assets, including registered</p>	<p>The site could cause unacceptable adverse impact on heritage assets and /or their settings.</p>	<p>The site may cause unacceptable adverse impact on heritage assets and/ or its setting in the</p>	<p>The site may cause a moderate unacceptable impact on heritage assets and/ or their</p>	<p><b><u>The site may cause a minor adverse impact on heritage</u></b></p>	<p>The site may not cause any adverse impact to Kent's heritage assets</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Consultation with Historic England and</p>

May 2023

<p>historic parks and gardens, Listed Buildings, a conservation area or its setting, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and features and defined heritage coastline.</p> <p>There is a presumption in favour of preserving Listed Buildings and their setting, nationally important archaeological remains in situ and their setting.</p> <p>Proposals for development should not have an adverse effect on Kent's heritage assets including its fabric, setting, amenity value and arrangements for reinstatement</p>	<p><i>Impacts include direct impact to designated assets of exceptional more than special interest, or special interest (Grade I, Grade II*, Grade or Scheduled Monument or implied significant), direct impact to known and significant undesignated assets (e.g previously investigated archeological sites)</i></p> <p>No opportunity to maintain or enhance historic asset.</p>	<p>absence of high-level mitigation.</p>	<p>settings in the absence of medium-level mitigation.</p> <p><i>Examples include no direct or indirect impacts to designated assets of exceptional more than special interest, or special interest (Grade I, Grade II*, Grade or Scheduled Monument or implied significant)</i></p>	<p><b><u>assets and/ or its setting in the absence of low-level mitigation.</u></b></p>	<p>and/or their settings.</p>	<p>officers specialised in archaeology and the historic environment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>
<p><b>Water Environment (including flooding)</b></p> <p>Proximity to Source Protection Zones (SPZ) or major/minor aquifers</p> <p>Proximity to vulnerable above-ground water bodies. The Water Framework Directive</p>	<p>The site could have a Severe unacceptable adverse impact upon groundwater SPZs and/or result in the deterioration of any water resource.</p>	<p>The site could have a major adverse impact on groundwater SPZs or water resources in the absence of high level mitigation.</p> <p>The site is classed as: 'Exception Test Required', according</p>	<p>The site could have a moderate adverse impact on groundwater SPZs or water resources in the absence of medium level mitigation.</p> <p>The site is classed as: 'Exception Test</p>	<p><b><u>The site could have a minor adverse impact on groundwater SPZs or water resources in the absence of low level mitigation (e.g working</u></b></p>	<p>The Site will have no unacceptable impact on water resources.</p> <p>'Development is appropriate' according to the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone</p>	<p>GIS Data</p> <p>Consultation with the Environment Agency and flood risk officers.</p>

May 2023

<p>objectives seek no deterioration in current water quality and good status in all water bodies)</p> <p>Proximity to Flood Zones - dependent on type of development (Ref: Planning Practice Guidance*)</p> <p>Mineral extraction can provide opportunities for flood water and general water storage</p> <p><i>Note: The sites will be subject to a separate Sequential Testing exercise in accordance with the NPPF at Stage 3.</i></p> <p>The site is located within Zone 3 (Zone III) of a SPZ, total catchment area. The site is located within a principal aquifer. Part of the site is located within a high groundwater vulnerability area.</p> <p>The site is located within Flood Zone 1, low probability of flooding.</p>	<p>The site will exacerbate flood risk in areas prone to flooding.</p> <p>The site could have a severe unacceptable impact upon waterbodies within the site and or hydrologically connected to the site.</p> <p>The site is classed as: "Development should not be permitted" according to the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility Table in the Planning Practice Guidance*</p> <p>Phase 1 and Phase 2 Hydrogeological</p>	<p>to the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility Table in the Planning Practice Guidance and other sources of flooding could have a major impact requiring high levels of mitigation</p> <p>The site may have a major impact on vulnerable water bodies in the absence of high level mitigation.</p> <p>Phase 1 Hydrogeological Risk Assessment would be required prior to allocation.</p>	<p>Required' according to the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility Table in the Planning Practice Guidance and other sources of flooding could have a moderate impact requiring mitigation.</p> <p>The site may have a moderate impact on vulnerable water bodies in the absence of medium level mitigation.</p> <p>Phase 1 Hydrogeological Risk Assessment would be required prior to allocation.</p>	<p><b>above the water table)</b></p> <p>The site is classed as: 'Exception Test Required' according to the Flood Risk Vulnerability and Flood Zone Compatibility Table in the Planning Practice Guidance and other sources of flooding could have a moderate impact requiring mitigation.</p> <p>The site may have a minor impact on vulnerable water bodies in the absence of low level mitigation.</p>	<p>Compatibility Table in the Planning Practice Guidance and other sources of flooding could have no impact.</p> <p>Good opportunities for flood risk mitigation</p>	<p>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>
<p><b>Air Quality</b></p>	<p>The site is within an AQMA, unacceptable</p>	<p>The site is within an AQMA; unacceptable</p>	<p><b><u>The site is near to an AQMA or may have</u></b></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The site poses low or no risk of adverse impacts</p>	<p>GIS Data</p>

May 2023

<p>Emissions to air can be of concern at some facilities- dealt with at planning application stage if necessary, through use of conditions and controls</p> <p>Proximity to Air Quality Management Areas- Impacts on AQMA could be mitigated by conditions and controls.</p>	<p>adverse impacts cannot be mitigated.</p>	<p>adverse impacts may be mitigated.</p>	<p><b><u>adverse impacts on air quality that is capable of mitigation.</u></b></p>		<p>to AQMAs or air quality.</p>	<p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>
<p><b>Soil Quality</b></p> <p>Proximity or location of best and most versatile agricultural land. Where significant development of agricultural land is unavoidable, poorer quality land should be used in preference to higher quality.</p> <p>Consider location of sensitive land and soils</p> <p>Potential for enhancement</p>	<p>The entire site contains best and most versatile land which could be severely impacted by the development.</p>	<p>Large parts of the site contain best and most versatile land which could be majorly impacted by the development.</p>	<p><b><u>Small parts of the site contain best and most versatile land which would be moderately impacted by the development</u></b></p> <p>Opportunities for mitigation and restoration exist.</p>	<p>The site could impact best and most versatile land which could require minor mitigation.</p> <p>Good opportunities for mitigation and restoration.</p>	<p>The site contains low quality soil</p> <p>There could be opportunities to restore the site and enhance the quality of soil.</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Consultation with landscape officers and Natural England if necessary</p> <p>Officer Assessment - The site is located within Grade 2 for the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

<p><b>Public Rights of Way (PRoW)</b></p> <p>Consider the presence of public rights of way (Highways Act 1980 Section 41)</p> <p>Highways Act 1980 Section 130(1), duty of highway authority to assert and protect the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of any Impact on long distance trails (e.g. North Downs Way and England Coast Path)</p> <p>Potential for enhancement (would be sought at all sites)</p>	<p>The site is likely to cause severe unacceptable adverse impact upon the PRoW without satisfactory provision for diversion and/or mitigation.</p> <p>Significant adverse impact upon Kent's Long Distance Trails</p>	<p><b><u>The site is likely to cause major adverse impact upon the PRoW network and/or Kent's Long Distance Trails but this could be satisfactorily diverted and/or extensively mitigated.</u></b></p>	<p>The site could cause moderate adverse impact upon the PRoW network and/or Kent's Long Distance Trails but this could be satisfactorily diverted and/or mitigated.</p>	<p>Site is in the vicinity of the PRoW network and/or Kent's Long Distance Trails and may only cause minor adverse impacts on PRoW network and Kent's Long Distance Trails</p>	<p>Site will have no effect on PRoW network and Kent's Long Distance Trails. An opportunity for enhancement has been identified.</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Consultation with the County Council's PRoW officers</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>
<p><b>Transport (Including Access)</b></p> <p>Proximity to Kent's Trunk Roads, Primary Route Network and Secondary Route Network will be assessed, including the presence of width, height and weight restrictions along these routes</p>	<p>The site could have a severe unacceptable adverse impact on transport and access in the absence of high level mitigation.</p> <p>There are severe issues with access to the Primary Route Network and Secondary Route Network.</p>	<p>The site could have a major adverse impact on transport and access in the absence of high level mitigation.</p> <p>There are major issues with access to the Primary Route Network and Secondary Route Network.</p>	<p>The site could have a moderate adverse impact on transport and access in the absence of medium level mitigation.</p> <p><b><u>There are moderate issues with access to the Primary Route Network and</u></b></p>	<p>The site could have a minor adverse impact on transport and access in the absence of low level mitigation.</p> <p>There are minor issues with access to the Primary Route Network and Secondary Route Network.</p>	<p>The site will not give rise to any adverse impacts upon transport and access to Primary and Secondary Route Network.</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

	Mitigation is not practical.	The identified impacts could be mitigated through planning obligations.	<p><b><u>Secondary Route Network.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>The identified impacts could be mitigated through planning obligations.</u></b></p>	The identified impacts could be mitigated through planning obligations.		
<p><b>Services and Utilities</b></p> <p>Sites need sustainable access to utilities.</p> <p>Equally, they should not interfere with any utilities which pass underneath. Mitigation measures will be considered in terms of cost and benefits.</p> <p>Utilities include water, gas, electricity and telecommunications, as well as railways, HS1 and Crossrail assets.</p>	The site contains services or utilities which could be severely impacted on - no mitigation measures can be used.	<p><b><u>The site contains services or utilities which could require major mitigation through rerouting, or the location of cables/pipes hampers the ability to maximise yield from the site.</u></b></p>	The site contains services or utilities that could require consideration through re-routing or other medium levels of mitigation.	The site is near to services or utilities and any minor adverse impacts will require low-level mitigation.	There are no services or utilities near to, or within the site.	<p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Utility providers</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

<p><b>Health and Amenity</b></p> <p>This includes impact of noise, dust, vibration, odour, emissions, bioaerosols, illumination, visual intrusion, traffic, quality of life and community and environment wellbeing. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Kent MWLP state that the adverse impact of minerals and waste development on neighbouring communities should be minimised.</p> <p>Consider proximity of local communities whose amenity may be impacted by development</p> <p>Appropriate and suitable mitigation measures to reduce the risk of unacceptable adverse impacts should be considered.</p>	<p>The site could cause severe unacceptable adverse impact on health and amenity with no mitigation demonstrated.</p> <p>The site could cause a severe impact to adjacent land uses.</p>	<p><b><u>The site could cause major adverse impact to health and amenity from blasting in the absence of a high levels of mitigation as demonstrated.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>The site could cause a major impact to adjacent land uses.</u></b></p>	<p>The site may cause a moderate adverse impact to health and amenity in the absence of a medium levels of mitigation as demonstrated.</p> <p>Possibility to result in net planning benefit.</p> <p>The site could cause a moderate impact to adjacent land uses</p> <p>The site is considered to have a moderate to adverse impact to health and amenity.</p>	<p>The site may cause a minor adverse impact to health and amenity in the absence of low level mitigation.</p> <p>High possibility to result in net planning benefit.</p> <p>The site could cause a minor impact to adjacent land uses.</p>	<p>The site may not cause any adverse impact to health and amenity.</p> <p>The site could not unacceptably impact adjacent land uses.</p>	<p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>
<p><b>Cumulative Impacts</b></p> <p>Policies and proposals should take account of: Existing activity and impacts; the duration and nature of proposals for new or</p>	<p>The cumulation of activity at the site with existing development will result in an</p>	<p>The cumulation of activity at the site with existing development may result in an</p>	<p>The cumulation of activity at the site with existing development may result in moderate</p>	<p><b><u>The cumulation of activity at the site with existing development</u></b></p>	<p>There are no concerns of cumulative impacts resulting from the</p>	<p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

<p>further workings; and the extent of impacts that a particular site, locality, community, environment or wider areas of mineral working can reasonably be expected to tolerate over a particular or proposed period. The Kent MWLP is consistent with this.</p>	<p>unacceptable adverse impact on environment and/or communities that cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.</p>	<p>unacceptable adverse impact on environment and community that will require high level mitigation.</p>	<p>impact on the environment and community that will require medium level mitigation.</p>	<p><b><u>may have some impact on the environment and community that will require low level mitigation.</u></b></p>	<p>development of the site.</p>	
<p><b>Airport Safeguarding Zones</b></p> <p>Aircraft are vulnerable to birdstrikes, and 80% of all strikes occur on an aircraft's take-off or landing phase of flight, therefore highlighting the necessity for wildlife management on and within proximity of an airfield. Aerodrome administrators are responsible for monitoring bird activity within the relevant radius of the aerodrome. This is to mitigate the birdstrike risk to aircraft and be aware what species are in the local area. Many types of development, including large, flat-roofed structures, landfill sites, gravel pit restoration schemes and nature reserves.</p>	<p>The site is within an Airport Safeguarding Zone and the nature of the site is likely to attract birds and increase the risk of bird strike for aircraft.</p> <p>No mitigation is practical or possible.</p>	<p>The site is within an Airport Safeguarding Zone and the nature of the site is likely to attract birds and increase the risk of bird strike for aircraft.</p> <p>High level mitigation is required which may make the site undeliverable.</p>	<p>Site is within an Airport Safeguarding Zone. Either:</p> <p>Nature of the site means that it is unlikely to attract birds and increase the risk of birdstrike for aircraft. The site is likely to be deliverable through employing medium level mitigation measures so it is unlikely to attract birds and increase the risk of birdstrike.</p>	<p>Site is within an Airport Safeguarding Zone. Either:</p> <p>Nature of the site means that it is unlikely to attract birds and increase the risk of birdstrike for aircraft.</p> <p>The site is likely to be deliverable through employing low level mitigation measures so it is unlikely to attract birds and increase the risk of birdstrike.</p>	<p><b><u>The site is not within an Airport Safeguarding Zone and therefore will have no impact.</u></b></p>	<p>CAA, NATS</p> <p>Officer assessment</p> <p>Promoter of site</p>

May 2023

<p><b>Green Belt</b></p> <p>Within the NPPF is a Presumption to consider development within the Green Belt inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and should be refused except in very special circumstances.</p>	<p>Site constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt, and no substantive case for very special circumstances has been presented.</p>	<p>Site constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and a case for very special circumstances has been presented. Major levels of mitigation may be required.</p>	<p>Site constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt, but a substantive persuasive case for very special circumstances has been presented. Medium levels of mitigation may be required.</p>	<p>Site constitutes inappropriate development within the Green Belt and a substantive persuasive case for very special circumstances has been presented. Low levels of mitigation may be required.</p>	<p><b><u>Site is not within the Green Belt and therefore will not cause any harm to the Greenbelt.</u></b></p> <p>Site is within the Green Belt but it is not considered inappropriate development.</p>	<p>GIS data</p> <p>Officer assessment</p>
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