GWYNDY QUARRY, LLANDRYGARN, LLANNERCHYMEDD, ANGLESEY LL71 7AW

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR PROPOSED EXTRACTION OF TWO ADDITIONAL LIFTS TO EXISTING QUARRY TO -10 METRES BELOW AOD.

PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

JULY 2025

House Associates,
Hill Farm, Mill Lane
Moston
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 3PS

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This statement has been prepared by House Associates to support the planning application for the proposed extraction of two additional lifts to the existing quarry at Gwyndy to -10 metres below AOD. The application is submitted by Hogan Aggregates Ltd, the operator of the site. Hogan Aggregates Ltd have operated the site since 1994.

1.2. The application site is outlined in red on Drawing ref No.GW1. All references to "the site" shall refer to this area.

1.3. The full planning history of the quarry is set out in Section 2 of this statement, however, the site has planning consent to operate as a quarry granted by Gwynedd County Council in 1994 (ref 14/LPA/621A/CC). An application to vary condition 15 regarding blast levels was approved in 2013. The current planning conditions which apply to the quarry are set out in Section 3 of this statement.

1.4. The site operations involve the blasting, extraction and processing of mineral (granite) and the production of concrete. Permission also exists for the acceptance of road planings at the site.

1.5. Advice in national and local planning policy documents has been taken into account in the preparation of this statement. A detailed analysis of those polices is set out in Section 5 of this statement.

2. PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 14/LPA/621/CC - Extension to Quarry. Approved 15/6/1992

2.2 14/LPA/621A/CC - IDO permission. Approved 30/3/1994

2.3 14/LPA/621B/CC - Change of use of part of quarry to a ready-made concrete plant. Approved 30/03/1996

2.4. 14C155C - application to allow the importation and storage of road planings prior to distribution. Approved 15/5/2003

2.5. 14C155G - Full application for the erection of a building for the storage of crushed stone. Approved 29/1/2009

2.6. 14C155H - Planning application to vary condition 17 of planning permission 14LPA621A\CC to lower the current blast limit of 10mm\s to 6mm\s in accordance with current guidance. Approved 16/10/2013

3. PLANNING CONDITIONS

3.1. The current planning conditions relating to Gwyndy Quarry are as set out in the IDO review undertaken by Gwynedd County Council in 1994, as amended by permission 14C155H in 2013. Those conditions are as follows:

(01) This permission is for a limited period, expiring on 21, February 2042, by which date the winning, working, processing, storage and dispatch of minerals and the depositing of mineral waste shall have ceased.

(02) The final restoration form of the quarry workings shall be water based. Restoration of final quarry faces shall be undertaken on a progressive basis in a sequence to be agreed with the mineral planning authority within 12 months of the date of this permission and in the form outlined on submitted sections no 13760/4 and 13760/5 or in such other sequence or form as may be agreed in writing with the mineral planning authority.

(03) Within 12 months of the completion or cessation of quarrying operations or such extended period as may be agreed in writing with the mineral planning authority all un restored quarry faces and topsoil stripped areas of the site shall be restored as far as possible within these terms and conditions and integrated into the surrounding landscape to the satisfaction of the mineral planning authority.

(04) Within 12 months of the completion or cessation of quarrying operations or such extended period as may be agreed in writing with the mineral planning authority all items of plant, machinery, buildings and equipment and any stockpiles and waste material within the area of the quarry shall be removed and the site left in a condition to the satisfaction of the mineral planning authority.

(05) No topsoil from the area of the extension shall be removed from the site and topsoils, subsoils, peat or soil forming materials that are affected by mineral workings or ancillary development shall be stripped in advance of operations and stored in areas to be agreed in writing with the Mineral Planning Authority and in such a manner as to ensure that it is maintained in a good condition. Stored topsoil shall only be re-employed in connection with the approved restoration works.

(06) The handling, stripping and replacement of topsoils and subsoils shall only be undertaken during or immediately following such periods of fine weather as will permit the movement of the soils with the minimum damage thereto.

(07) No imported topsoils, subsoils, refuse or waste materials of any description shall be employed in restoration works otherwise disposed of within the site.

(08) Prior to any landscaping work along the quarry's boundary a scheme shall be submitted for the approval of the mineral planning authority showing details of the location, form, construction and phasing of any screen bunds and landscaping. The scheme shall include for:

i) Specifications of tree and shrubs species and measures for their protection;
ii) Maintenance for a period of 5 years after planting
iii) An analysis of existing landscape features.

(09) Any oil, fuel or chemical storage tanks shall be contained within an impervious bunded area which shall be of sufficient capacity to contain 110% of the tank volume and shall enclose all fill and drain pipes.

(10) Accumulated surface water shall be discharged from the quarry workings into the watercourse delineating the eastern boundary of the site. All such surface water shall be discharged via a lagoon system with scum boards and oil interceptor so designed and maintained as to prevent the discharge of fines or deleterious substances into the watercourse.

(11) Not less than 6 months before working commences therein each phase of the quarry operation shall be pegged out or otherwise defined to the satisfaction of the mineral planning authority.

*(12) Except for the road stone coating plant, no operation authorised or required by this permission shall be undertaken and no plant shall be operated at the site outside the hours of 0600 - 1900 Monday to Saturday inclusive. No such operations shall be undertaken on Sundays or Bank or Public Holidays. This condition shall not however operate so as to prevent the carrying out of essential maintenance to any plant or machinery used on the site or quarry de-watering operations***.**

(13) The road stone coating plant shall not be operated before 05:00 hours or after 19:00 hours Monday to Saturday inclusive or on Sundays or public holidays without the prior written approval of the mineral planning authority, which shall be limited to no more than 6 occasions in any year.

(14) No operation on the site shall be undertaken in such manner as to cause the raising of dust and all areas traversed by wheeled vehicles or within which the handling or movement of quarry material is undertaken shall be watered or otherwise treated at such times and intervals as may be necessary to prevent the raising of dust.

(15) All machinery and vehicles employed on the site shall be fitted with effective silencers of a type appropriate to their specification and at all times the noise emitted by vehicles, plant, machinery or otherwise arising from on-site activities, shall be minimised in accordance with the guidance provided in British Standard 5228 (1984) Code of Practice; 'Noise Control on Construction and Open Sites'.

(16) Plant vehicles shall be fitted with white noise alarms when reversing.

(17) No blasting operation shall be undertaken in such a manner as to produce a peak particle velocity in excess of 6mm/s for 95% of blasts measured over a twelve month period with no individual blast measuring greater than 10mm/s.

(18) Within 3 months of the date hereof blast monitoring measures shall be implemented in accordance with a scheme to be agreed in writing with the Mineral Planning Authority.
The scheme shall include:

(a) Blast monitoring locations and frequency of monitoring;
(b) The monitoring equipment to be used;
(c) The results of such monitoring shall be sent to the Mineral Planning Authority following each blast.
*(d) Procedures to be adopted if blast limits are exceeded***.**

(19) No vehicles shall be permitted to leave the site in such a condition as to cause the egress of mud, water and other detritus onto the highway.

(20) While the quarry is operational, the land within the visibility splay on the junction of the Class III road and the Class II B5109 shall be maintained in such a manner as to prevent the growth of vegetation in excess of one meter in height.

(21) At such time as any plant, machinery or building on the site is painted during the course of routine maintenance operations they shall be finished in one of the following BS4800 colours:-

08B29 / 06C39 / 10C39 / 10B25 / 12B29 / 12B25

4 APPLICATION SITE AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1. Gwyndy Quarry, located in Llandrygan, Llannerch-y-medd in central Anglesey, has been operational since 1960. Granite is quarried for a variety of aggregate uses. Annual production ranges between 250,000 and 300,000 tonnes per annum from three active benches. The quarry currently extends to 20m AOD, approximately 40m below the original ground surface.

4.2. In order to extend the operational life of the quarry and to maximise the extraction of the granite resource, it is proposed that the quarry will be deepened by two benches (30 m) and extend laterally to the extraction limit. This will be undertaken in four phases as indicated in drawing Nos GWY-20-01, GWY-20-02, GWY-20-03 and GWY-20-04 submitted with this application. The proposed deepening is anticipated to yield 10,881,000 tonnes of rock which will extend the life of the quarry by approximately 34 years, assuming an average annual production rate of 300,000 tonnes.

4.3 Phase 1 2026 – 2034 980,000m3

The mineral reserve in Phase 1 amounts to 2,646,000 tonnes at 5m AOD

4.4. Phase 2 2034 – 2041 860,000 m3

The mineral reserve in Phase 2 amounts to 2,295,000 tonnes at -5m AOD

4.5. Phases 3/4 2041 - 2061 2,200,000 m3

The mineral reserve in Phases 3 and 4 amounts to 5,940,000 tonnes at -10m AOD

4.6 The current quarrying operations at Gwndy are progressing much nearer to the village of LLandrygarn and the proposed additional benches would avoid working in close proximity to the village. It would also avoid any additional overburden strip in close proximity to the village.

4.7. The additional benches would allow more processing of the granite to be undertaken on the quarry floor thus reducing the visual impact of storing a considerable amount of material at ground level.

4.8. There are some geology changes on the higher benches near to the southern end of the site which contains discoloured rock that cannot be used in highway works. This is illustrated in Plates 1 and 2 below. If quarrying continues in this area, more material would have to be stockpiled at the top of the site until this product is sold and as a consequence it would have to be moved twice. The benefit of the depth extension is that the product can be sold from source and there is no need for second handling or storage at ground level.

Plate 1 Discoloured Granite

Plate 2 Discoloured Granite

Site Restoration

4.9 A revised final restoration plan for the quarry is submitted with this application (Drawing JA-HA-GWQ-1-6-25). This is supported by a Restoration Proposals document which provides for the progressive restoration of the existing benches within the main quarry void. The upper benches of the proposed extension will be restored progressively utilising quarry waste fines. Ultimately, however, the quarry void will fill with water. The final restoration plan therefore provides for additional landscaping of the quarry periphery where feasible. The proposed site restoration plan provides a range of habitats including the creation of new ponds, acidic grassland and scrub woodland which will significantly increase biodiversity on the site.

5. PLANNING POLICY ANALYSIS

5.1. PLANNING POLICY WALES (EDITION 12, FEBRUARY 2024)

5.1.1 Within the introduction section of the Planning Policy Wales (PPW) Edition 12 February 2024 it advises that the PPW sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by a series of Technical Advice Notes (TANs), Welsh Government Circulars, and policy clarification letters, which together with PPW provide the national planning policy framework for Wales. PPW, the TANs, MTANs and policy clarification letters comprise national planning policy.

5.1.2 The introduction goes on to advise that the primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, as required by the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and other key legislation. A well- functioning planning system is fundamental for sustainable development and achieving sustainable places.

5.1.3 Under Section 2 People and Places: Achieving Well-being Through Placemaking, the document clarifies that Sustainable Places are the goal of the land use planning system in Wales; they are the output of the planning system rather than the process of achieving them. All development decisions, either through development plans policy choices or individual development management decisions should seek to contribute towards the making of sustainable places and improved well- being.

5.1.4 Key Planning Principles – Achieving the Right Development in the Right Place - Growing our economy in a sustainable manner

- Making best use of resources
- Facilitating accessible and healthy environments
- Creating & sustaining communities
- Maximising environmental protection and limiting environmental impact

5.1.5 With reference to the rural economy PPW advises that a strong rural economy is essential to support sustainable and vibrant rural communities. The establishment of new enterprises and the expansion of existing business is crucial to the growth and stability of rural areas.

5.1.6 In Section 5.14, PPW states that society needs, and will continue to need for the foreseeable future, a wide range of minerals. Minerals are the principal constituents of most construction products, many pharmaceutical, chemical, agricultural, automotive, metallurgical, electronics, aerospace, plastics ceramic and paper products. Construction related minerals and mineral products are particularly important in Wales and are essential for housing and infrastructure, such as schools, roads, railways, airports and flood defences and a steady and adequate supply of materials is necessary.

5.1.7 The role of the planning authority in relation to mineral extraction is to balance the fundamental requirement to ensure the adequate supply of minerals with the protection of amenity and the environment. Notably this application relates to the extension of a quarry site with an extant planning permission. There have been no issues raised with the current operation which has been ongoing for many years.

5.1.8. The key principles highlighted within the document are as follows:

- provide positively for the safeguarding and working of mineral resources to meet society's needs now and in the future, encouraging the efficient and appropriate use of high-quality materials;

- protect environmental and cultural characteristic of places, including those highly cherished for their intrinsic qualities, such as wildlife, landscapes, ancient woodlands and historic features, and to protect human health and safety and general well-being;

- reduce the impact of mineral extraction and related operations during the period of working by ensuring that impacts on relevant environmental qualities caused by mineral extraction and transportation, for example air quality and soundscape, are within acceptable limits; and

- achieving, without compromise, a high standard of restoration and aftercare so as to avoid dereliction and to bring discernible benefits to communities, heritage and/or wildlife, including beneficial after uses or opportunities for enhancement of biodiversity and the historic environment.

5.1.9 Mineral working is different from other forms of development in that:

- extraction can only take place where the mineral is found to occur;

- it is transitional and cannot be regarded as a permanent land use even though operations may occur over a long period of time; and

- when operations cease land needs to be reclaimed to a high standard and to a beneficial and sustainable after-use so as to avoid dereliction and to bring discernible benefits to communities and/or wildlife.

5.1.10 In relation to this proposal the operator seeks permission to lower the permitted level of extraction at the existing quarry. There will be no change to physical footprint of the quarry nor will there be any alteration to the day-to-day operation of the site. This proposal will ensure the ongoing operation of this beneficial and sustainable development.

5.1.11 It is essential to the economic health of the country that the construction industry is provided with an adequate supply of the minerals it needs. The main sources of aggregates are crushed rock and sand and gravel – both land-won and marine-dredged. The importance to the UK of aggregates should be taken into account when planning applications are being considered

together with other policies in this guidance and relevant Minerals Technical Advice Notes (MTANs) and Technical Advice Notes (TANs).

5.1.12 PPW seeks to secure net benefits for biodiversity through the application of the step-wise approach in planning applications, including the acknowledgement of off-site compensation measures as a last resort, and, the need to consider enhancement and long-term management at each step. Green Infrastructure Statements should be prepared as a means of demonstrating the stepwise approach to biodiversity gain.

5.2 Minerals Technical Advice Note (Wales) 1: Aggregates March 2004

5.2.1. The advice note highlights that the overarching objective in planning for aggregates provision is to ensure supply is managed in a sustainable way so that the best balance between environmental, economic and social considerations is struck, while making sure that the environmental and amenity impacts of any necessary extraction are kept to a level that avoids causing demonstrable harm to interests of acknowledged importance.

5.3 Technical Advice Note (Wales) 5: Nature Conservation and Planning (September 2009)

5.3.1. This Technical Advice Note provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation. This TAN has been reviewed along with more recently published planning policies contained within the PPW Edition 10. The proposed development is located within an existing facility. The proposal will have no adverse implications on any designated nature conservation sites or protected species.

5.4 Technical Advice Note (Wales) 11: Noise (October 1997)

5.4.1 This note provides advice on how the planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business. It outlines some of the main considerations which local planning authorities should take into account in drawing-up development plan policies and when determining planning applications for development which will either generate noise or be exposed to existing noise sources.

5.4.2 There are no ongoing investigations or complaints in relation to noise from the site. An appropriate buffer exists to sensitive receptors and this will continue to be maintained if permission is granted under this application.

5.5 Technical Advice Note 20: Planning and the Welsh Language (October 2017)

5.5.1 The Welsh language is an important part of the overall heritage of the area and this development will have a positive impact on the use of Welsh language. This is demonstrated in the Welsh Language Statement submitted with this application.

5.6 Technical Advice Note (Wales) 23: Economic Development (February 2014)

5.6.1 This TAN advises that it is important that the planning system recognises the economic aspects of all development and that planning decisions are made in a sustainable way which balance social, environmental and economic considerations. It goes on to note that it should not be assumed that economic objectives are necessarily in conflict with social and environmental objectives. Often these different dimensions point in the same direction. Planning should positively and imaginatively seek such 'win-win' outcomes, where development contributes to all dimensions of sustainability.

5.6.2 This proposal supports a sustainable and economically viable business which has operated successfully from this site for many years. The operation has not adversely impacted on the surrounding environment and with associated economic investment within the local area thereby providing economic gain in a sustainable manner.

5.7 North Wales Regional Technical Statement (RTS) 1st Review (August 2014)

5.7.1 The RTS recognises that, in terms of providing aggregates, secondary and recycled materials should play a significant part in meeting fluctuations above reasonable estimates of demand levels. However, evidence is emerging that the contribution made by secondary and recycled aggregates appears to have peaked. As supply of such material is largely dependent upon the level of construction activity, it is reasonable to assume that when troughs in economic cycles are encountered, construction activity may slow down with a subsequent dearth of material that can be relied upon to produce recycled aggregate. As such, sufficient provision should be made to ensure a continuity of supply of construction materials from primary resources.

5.7.2 The RTS addresses this eventuality by investigating the likely continued availability of secondary and recycled aggregates from all available sources within each area making up the region, and factoring this into an assessment of the residual demand for land-based primary aggregates, as informed primarily by historical sales data. That residual level of demand is then translated into apportionments for each local authority, subject to the consideration of other sustainability issues including proximity and environmental capacity.

5.7.3 The maintenance of aggregate landbanks is a key requirement of planning policy and has been referred to above. In times when landbanks are insufficient to enable meeting identified demand, the RTS acknowledges that allocations for the winning and working of minerals should be made. As has been stated above, a shortfall in Anglesey's landbank was identified, such shortfall being in the region of 1.31M tonnes.

5.8 North Wales Regional Technical Statement (RTS) 2nd Review (September 2020)

5.8.1. The second review of the RTS (RTS2) covers the 25 years period up to 2041. For Anglesey it provides a suggested total apportionment of 8.015 million tonnes of crushed rock over 25 years, and an annualised apportionment of 0.321 million tonnes per annum (Table 5.6). Table 5.5 also identifies that Anglesey had 14.4 million tonnes of existing permitted crushed rock

reserves at the end of 2016, and an existing landbank of 44.9 years. A footnote to the table states that "Where allocation requirements are shown these are the minimum amounts required to meet the RTS requirements. In many cases an application for an individual new permission will exceed these amounts, in the interests of economic viability. Such applications should not be rejected purely on the grounds of exceeding the minimum requirements shown here. In some cases, the suggested allocations may already have been partially or entirely fulfilled, either by new permissions granted since 2016, or by allocations that have already been identified in LDPs." It should also be noted that the apportionments are based on data from 2007 -16 since when demand for crushed rock has grown considerably.

5.9 Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026

5.9.1 On 31 July 2017 Gwynedd and Isle of Anglesey County Council adopted a Joint Local Development Plan. The LDP forms the development plan for Gwynedd and Anglesey Local Planning Authority areas and will be the basis for decisions on land use planning in this area (excluding the Snowdonia National Park).

5.9.2 **Strategic Policy PS 1: Welsh Language and Culture** sets the context for the assessment of the potential impact of proposals upon the language and culture. The proposed development is located at an existing and well-established local operation which supports the local community through employment and provision of business investment within the local area. A separate Welsh Language Statement has been submitted in support of this application.

5.9.3 **Strategic Policy PS5: Sustainable Development** seeks to ensure that the location, scale and type of development allowed follows sustainable development principles and achieves environmental, economic and social gains for current and future generations of the Plan area.

5.9.4 The proposed development is entirely consistent with the principles of sustainable development for the following reasons:

- The development seeks a lower level of extraction than originally approved. It does not extend the footprint of the quarry, thus avoiding the need for disturbance to previously undeveloped land in a rural location;
- It will sustain important local employment opportunities and promote a varied and responsive local economy that encourages investment supporting local rural communities;
- It will protect, support and promote the use of the Welsh language in accordance with Strategic Policy PS 1; and
- As a result of the higher standard of restoration proposed, the development will result in a net gain in biodiversity and there will be no impact upon the local landscape.

5.9.5 **Strategic Policy PS 22: Minerals** Within the introduction to minerals section of the LDP it advises that the overarching objective in planning for minerals is to ensure supply is managed in a

sustainable way so that the best balance between environmental, economic and social considerations is struck, while making sure that the environmental and amenity impacts of any extraction are kept to a level that avoids causing demonstrable harm to environmental and amenity interests. Under policy PS 22 the LDP clarifies that the Councils will contribute to regional and local demand for a continuous supply of minerals in accordance with the key objectives and principles of sustainable development. The policy acknowledges that "*where the principles of sustainable development can be achieved, the extension of existing quarries and/or new quarries is likely to be appropriate*."

5.9.6 **Policy MWYN 1: Safeguarding Mineral Resources** Mineral Safeguarding Areas have been identified and are shown on the Proposals Map to ensure that known mineral resources are safeguarded for the future. Mineral resources will be safeguarded from non-mineral development that would sterilise or hinder their extraction.

5.9.7 **Policy MWYN 2: Preferred Areas** identifies areas which will be safeguarded to ensure that there is future provision of minerals to meet the needs of industry, having regard to the shortfalls identified in the First Review of the North Wales Regional Technical Statement. Gwyndy Quarry is listed as one of the preferred areas for the future supply of crushed rock.

5.9.8. **Policy MWYN 3: Mineral Developments** advises that extensions to existing operations will be granted to maintain the Plan area's landbank of aggregates, or to meet a demonstrated need for other minerals provided that certain criteria are met. This criterion is identified below:

1. There is no unacceptable harm to the amenity or health of local residents in terms of visual impact, levels of dust, noise, vibration, and light as a result of the operation itself or the resulting traffic movements;

   Comment: This is an application for a deeper excavation than is currently permitted at a long- established mineral quarry. This proposal will have no impact on the visual amenity of the locality. Furthermore, information submitted with the application demonstrates that the operation will cause no additional impact from dust, noise, vibration or light either at the site or by associated transport movements.

2. There is a suitable buffer between mineral development and sensitive development;

   Comment: The site is an existing quarry with an appropriate buffer zone between the extraction area and nearby residential properties.

3. There is no unacceptable harm to the stability and support of adjacent land;

   Comment: The proposed extension will not cause harm to the stability and support of adjacent land.

4. The development is sensitively screened and landscaped;

   Comment: The proposed development will not be visible from outside the quarry. The quarry will be sensitively landscaped upon restoration.

5. The development will not have a significant adverse impact on sites of international, national, regional or local environmental, nature conservation, landscape and /or heritage importance;

   Comment: The proposed development will not have any adverse impacts on sites of environmental, nature conservation or heritage importance.

6. The proposal does not sterilize or otherwise prevent the working of other significant mineral deposits;

   Comment: The proposed development will not sterilise or prevent the working of mineral deposits.

7. There is no unacceptable harm to land drainage groundwater and water resources;

   Comment: The proposed development will not cause harm to groundwater or water resources.

8. The proposal ensures that the potential use of the resource is maximised and there is satisfactory disposal of any waste arising from the mineral operation;

   Comment: The potential use of the resource is maximised and all waste will be utilised in the restoration of the site.

9. Where blasting is proposed, the proposal includes a scheme of blasting to demonstrate that it can be controlled to meet the conditions detailed in Mineral Technical Advice Note MTAN (Wales) 1: Aggregates, or any amendments;

   Comment: Blasting will be carried out in compliance with MTAN (Wales) 1.

10. The proposal includes a scheme for the after-use of the site and details of the restoration and aftercare required to achieve it in accordance with Policy MWYN 9;

    Comment: the application provides for the sensitive and ecologically beneficial restoration of the site and its long term management.

11. Wherever economically feasible, mineral waste or products should be transported by rail or water.

Comment: The geographical location of the site is such that the transport of mineral products by rail or water is not practicable.

5.9.9 **Policy MWYN 5: Buffer Zones around Mineral Sites** relates to buffer zones around minerals sites. Planning applications for mineral extraction within the buffer zones identified on the Proposals Map will not normally be permitted unless a new buffer zone can be provided to reflect the minimum distances referred to in MTAN 1: Aggregates, unless there are clear and justifiable reasons for reducing the distance, i.e. where there is limited impact from the mineral extraction site. A buffer zone of at least 200m is required around a hard rock quarry.

5.9.10 A buffer zone is already in place at Gwyndy Quarry. As the proposed development does not involve the lateral extension of the quarry, the buffer zone will remain unchanged.

5.9.11 **Policy MWYN 9: Restoration and Aftercare** identifies the need to ensure appropriate restoration and aftercare of sites. Applications for mineral working will be refused unless a comprehensive scheme for restoration, aftercare and after use, including details of proposed funding where necessary is included. Schemes must show progressive working and restoration unless it can be demonstrated that this is not practical without sterilising permitted reserves. The scheme should address the following matters:

1. The existing use of the site;
2. Adjoining land uses;
3. The proposed after-use of the site;
4. The surrounding landscape character;
5. The proposed final landform;
6. The in-situ soil resource, its conservation during site working, and its use in the progressive restoration and after-use;
7. Timetable detailing the progressive restoration of the site to a high standard;
8. The potential for natural re-colonisation or for enhancing or providing wildlife habitats, agriculture, forestry, geo-conservation and amenity use;
9. The potential for community economic and recreational benefit; and
10. Other policies of the Plan.

Comment: The application contains full details of the restoration of the site for wildlife habitats and possible recreational use.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 Need

6.1.1 Quarrying can only occur where suitable rock occurs and is accessible, and where the land and minerals owners are willing to allow such development to occur. There is general premise that it is more sustainable to extend an existing quarry than to develop a new green-field quarry.

6.1.2. Currently 70% of material quarried at Gwyndy goes to asphalt production (40% to Hogan and 30% to other asphalt producers). The remaining 30% of mineral is used in drainage and fill. Over 70% of Hogan production goes into the local Anglesey market including a ten-year contract with Anglesey County Council. The remaining 30% of Hogan production is destined for the North Wales area i.e. NMWTRA, Conway, Flintshire and Denbighshire. With the security of additional consented reserves, the quarry will also have the potential to readily supply any emerging local markets particularly in respect of major infrastructure projects that might arise. For example, the UK Government has recently announced that a new nuclear power facility will be constructed at Wylfa; the quarry extension at Gwyndy would have the potential to be a highly sustainable local resource provider for that major infrastructure project.

6.1.3. An increase in the landbank for aggregates in Anglesey will not result in over provision as aggregates are only quarried when demand occurs.

6.2 Economic Benefits

6.2.1 Technical Advice Note 13: Economic Development (TAN 13) states in Para 1.2.1 that:

> *"The economic benefits associated with development may be geographically spread out far beyond the area where the development is located. As a consequence it is essential that the planning system recognises, and gives due weight to, the economic benefits associated with new development"*

6.2.2 TAN 13 advises that in assessing the economic benefit of development, Local Planning Authorities should consider development proposals in terms of alternative sites, jobs accommodated and special merit (the special contribution that the proposal would make to policy objectives).

6.2.3 TAN 13 recognises that the creation of jobs is beneficial to the economy and even more so in areas of disadvantage. Anglesey has historically been reliant on agriculture and tourism to provide employment. However, agricultural employment has significantly declined in recent years and jobs in tourism tend to be seasonal and relatively low paid, thus the retention and creation of jobs in the quarrying sector that this development would achieve would be of particular economic benefit.

6.2.4 The demand for the product is growing and the additional output from the quarry that is proposed will assist the North Wales Minerals and Waste Planning Service maintain its required minerals reserves. The proposed development will sustain the employment of 18

employees directly employed within Hogan Aggregates and over 100 within the Hogan Group as well as over 100 sub-contractors. The quarry, therefore, represents an important component of the economy of Anglesey and the wider North Wales region.

6.2.5 All of the employees are Welsh speaking, as confirmed in the Welsh Language Statement submitted with this application.

6.3. Hydrology

6.3.1 The applicant commissioned Hydrotechnica to undertake a Hydrological Assessment of the proposed development. In terms of future groundwater flows, the Assessment Groundwater inflow to the current quarry void is estimated at approximately 100 m^3/day. Future inflows are predicted to rise to approximately 200 m^3/day, which for context represents less than 0.2% of rainfall within the Afon Crigyll catchment that contains Gwyndy Quarry. In the absence of evaporation, all groundwater inflows would be discharged to a local field drain. Therefore, the value of 0.2% may be considered a worst-case impact on water resources, one that may only occur during the summer when evaporation from the quarry floor removes inflowing groundwater before it can be discharged. Throughout the majority of the year water flowing into the quarry is discharged into a drain that feeds eventually into the Afon Crigyll, therefore, reducing the impact on catchment scale water resources close to zero.

6.3.2 In respect of water table drawdown, an assessment of future water table drawdown (the area of influence) was undertaken. An analytical model indicates that, in a worst-case scenario, there could be 1 m drawdown at a distance of 1,000 m from the quarry (in the SW-NE direction of geological strike). Field data indicates considerably less drawdown in the NW-SE direction. Details of private water supplies within 2 km of Gwyndy Quarry were provided by Anglesey Council (three bore holes and seven wells). Three of the seven wells are identified within the area of potential influence. A combination of the records received and inquiries at the relevant properties show that the three boreholes and three wells considered potentially at risk are no longer in use.

6.3.3. A closure water balance model was developed to predict the recovery of the water levels within the quarry void. The model, which was based on average climatic conditions and required assumptions regarding future climate conditions, the groundwater flow system and surface water catchment, predicts at least 36 years for the formation of a quarry lake to pre-existing groundwater levels. A longer time frame is considered likely. Water level recovery is not linear, the steeper the hydraulic gradient towards the quarry, the faster a lake will form. Water level recovery will, therefore, be greatest in early years. For example, depending on hydraulic and climatic variables, between 15 and 30 m of water level recovery is predicted within the first 10 years.

6.4 Noise, Dust, Vibration and Pollution

6.4.1 Given the nature of the proposed development which is in effect a continuation of the existing quarrying activities albeit at a greater depth, it is not anticipated that there will be any adverse impacts on noise, dust, vibration or pollution. There are conditions in place within extant planning permission 14C155H to control dust (14), noise and vibration (15, 16, 17, 18) and pollution.

6.5 Landscape and Visual Impact

6.5.1 The proposed excavation works will be significantly below ground level and consequently will not have any landscape or visual impact. Although some existing storage and operational space will be lost within the quarry void as additional benches are developed below the existing quarry floor, these will be relocated as required within the quarry void and will consequently not have any landscape or visual impact.

6.6 Ecology and Biodiversity (Green Infrastructure)

6.6.1. As referred to above, the Welsh Government has recently made changes to Planning Policy Wales to address the nature emergency by publishing a revised Chapter 6 'Distinctive and Natural Placemaking and Well-Being'. The policy changes came into immediate affect and impacts on all planning applications.

6.6.2. A key change is the requirement for all planning applications to be submitted with a 'Green Infrastructure Statement' (para 6.2.5). A 'Green Infrastructure Statement' is now required with all new applications and should describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal.

6.6.3 The statement should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development. The Green Infrastructure Statement is intended to be an effective way of demonstrating positive multi-functional outcomes which are appropriate to the site in question and must be used for demonstrating how the 'Step-wise Approach' (Paragraph 6.4.21) has been applied.

6.6.4. The 'Step-wise Approach' looks to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimized, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for.

6.6.5 The applicant commissioned UES Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the Quarry to support this application. UES has also provided a Great Crested Newt Impact Assessment (GCNIA).

6.6.6 The PEA found that there are three ponds and two ditches within the base of the quarry, with a further three ponds in the ownership boundary. The areas surrounding the quarry contain

a range of additional habitats including dense scrub, semi-improved grassland, scattered trees and a mixed semi-natural woodland.

6.6.7 The preliminary ecological appraisal highlighted potential issues with the following ecological receptors on or adjacent to site: amphibians, bats, breeding birds, reptiles, woodland, trees, watercourse and ponds / waterbodies. Provided these issues are address in accordance with the recommendations detailed in the report, the PEA concludes that the development may proceed without adversely impacting the ecological receptors. The development also presents an opportunity to enhance the habitats available to wildlife on site. The provisioning of bat and bird nest boxes on site will provide improved roosting and nesting opportunities into the long-term future of the site.

6.6.8 The GCNIA noted that there are three ponds and two ditches within the base of the quarry, with a further three ponds in the ownership boundary, and an additional pond directly adjacent to the western boundary of the site. These waterbodies were subject to eDNA analysis in April 2024. Ponds 2-7 and Ditches 1-2 returned negative eDNA results showing 0 replicates out of 12, indicating that GCN are likely absent from these waterbodies. Pond 1 returned positive eDNA results, however it is considered unlikely that GCN will be present within the proposed development area. As such, the report concludes that works can proceed under a non-licensed GCN method statement.

6.6.9 As noted in paragraph 4.9 above, the revised final restoration plan for the quarry provides for the progressive restoration of the existing benches within the main quarry void. The upper benches of the proposed extension will be restored progressively utilising quarry waste fines. The final restoration plan provides for additional landscaping of the quarry periphery where feasible. The proposed site restoration plan provides a range of habitats which will increase biodiversity on the site

6.7 Highways

6.7.1 The proposed development will merely extend the operational life of the quarry. It will not result in an increase in the rate of mineral extraction and consequently will not result in any increase in vehicle movements to and from the site. There are no existing conditions relating to vehicle movements in place for the quarry and the site has adequate access to and from the B5109.

6.8 Waste

6.8.1 As part of the process of mineral extraction, a small amount of waste material (fines) is produced. This material is stored on site. The landscape restoration proposals for the site provide for the progressive restoration of the existing benches within the main quarry void. The upper benches of the proposed extension will be restored progressively utilising stored quarry waste fines.

6.9 Alternatives

6.9.1 Three alternative scenarios have been considered: extend the quarry laterally; a new quarry and; do nothing.

6.9.2 With regard to extending the quarry, this would entail the use of land outside the control of the applicant and the landowner consent may not be forthcoming. The lateral extension of the quarry would result in significant environmental impacts including impacts on ecology, noise, dust, lighting, vibration, visual impact and hydrology none of which arise with this application.

6.9.3 The alternative of a new quarry would be subject to finding a suitable location with regards to the quality of the mineral deposit and the agreement of the landowner. There would be considerable initial infrastructure costs and equally significant potential environmental impacts on ecology, noise, dust, lighting, vibration, visual impact. highways and hydrology none of which arise with this application.

6.9.4 If the applicant decided to do nothing, the remaining mineral reserve at the quarry would last for a further 6 years. Thereafter the quarry would close with the loss of 18 jobs and the resultant loss of a supply of a mineral product that is in great demand.

6.10 Pre-Application Consultation

6.10.1 In accordance with Article 2D of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, a pre-application public consultation exercise has been undertaken in respect of the proposed quarry extension. A report on the Pre-Application public consultation has been submitted with this application. The Pre-Application consultation has been carried out in full accordance with the requirements of the above-mentioned Order.

7. CONCLUSIONS

7.1. Gwyndy Quarry is a long-established and important supplier of aggregates to established markets, particularly within Anglesey, North Wales and the surrounding area. Without the release of further reserves and the extension of the existing permissions the quarry will be forced to close, resulting in the loss of an important supply of primary aggregate and the loss of direct and indirect employment. These factors would have significant detrimental impact on the local construction industry, particularly within the regional market and on the local economy.

7.2 In order to secure an additional important source of primary aggregates, it is proposed that the quarry will be deepened by two benches (30 m) and extended laterally to the extraction limit. This will be undertaken in four phases. The proposed deepening is anticipated to yield 5,895,000 tonnes of rock which will extend the life of the quarry by approximately 22 years, assuming an average annual production rate of 300,000 tonnes. The methodology provides for a phased working scheme which allows for the progressive restoration of the quarry thus ensuring that habitats develop during the operational life of the quarry.

7.3 Potential impacts in respect of hydrology and ecology have been evaluated and specialist technical assessments have been undertaken to demonstrate that any potential impacts are capable of being appropriately mitigated. Accordingly, the proposed extension will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on either amenity or environmental receptors. The proposed restoration of the site will include several different types of habitat which will result in a significant increase in biodiversity on the site.

7.4 The development has been assessed against both national and local planning policy and through its ability to secure essential supplies of primary aggregates in the most economically and environmentally manner possible, clearly represents sustainable development. Overall, as great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy, it is considered that the benefits of the development outweigh any limited harm identified, and that the planning balance therefore falls in favour of the development.

7.5 In light of the above, and for the reasons set out within this Statement, it is considered that the development accords with all relevant planning policies and material considerations and accordingly planning permission for the development should be granted without delay.