Ref. No. SCE.311/107 M		**Site / Location:** Freehay Quarry, Freehay Road, Staffordshire	
Description of development: Request for an EIA Screening Opinion in connection with a proposal to amend the development to allow the construction of a new silt lagoon.			
PART 1 - Is a Screening Opinion Required? ***(ref:*** EIA Regulations 2017***, and*** Planning Practice Guidance – Screening Schedule 2 projects			**Yes / No**
1	Development Description	Do you have enough information to define the size and type of development (a plan, description of type/nature/ purpose and possible effects)?** • **Yes** (proceed to step 2) (Request for Screening Opinion SCE.311/107 M) • **No** - *either take the precautionary principle and assume the worst case or, request more information confirming 3 week deadline not commence until received*; ***Note* - ***Changes or extensions may also need an EIA!*** *(Schedule 2, category 13)*	**Yes**
2	Is it a Schedule 1 development?	• **Yes/No** (explain) **YES** – The development is category……. and a **screening opinion is not required as an EIA mandatory!** **NO** – *If the development is not listed in Schedule 1 it may be listed in Schedule 2* (proceed to step 3)	**No**
3	Is it a Schedule 2 development? (Schedule 2, Col 1)	• **Yes/No** (explain) • **YES -** The development falls/could fall within category 13 a) any change to or extension of development of a description listed in Schedule 1 (refer to 2a – extractive industry – all development except the construction of buildings or other ancillary structures where the new floorspace does not exceed 1,000 square metres.) (proceed to step 4) • **NO** – If the development is not listed in Schedule 2 a **screening opinion is not required and EIA not required**!	**Yes**

	4(a) Does the development fall within the absolute threshold/criteria? (Schedule 2, Col 2)	**Yes/No** – (explain) The threshold/criteria is/are 13 a) Either: (i) The development as changed or extended may have significant adverse effects on the environment; or (ii) in relation to development of a description mentioned in a paragraph in Schedule 1, the thresholds and criteria in column 2 of the paragraph of the table (see Schedule 2 of EIA Regulations) applied to the change or extension are met or exceeded. In this case – "All development except the construction of buildings or other ancillary structures where the new floorspace does not exceed 1,000 square metres." (proceed to step 4b)	**Yes**
4	4(b) Is the proposal within/near to a 'sensitive area'? (e.g. SSSI, NP, AONB, SAC, RAMSAR, Scheduled Monument)	• **Yes/No –** (explain) **YES** – The development falls within/near to the following designated site(s) 2.7 kilometres from Dimmings Dale & The Ranger SSSI (Freehay Quarry also falls within two Sites of Biological Importance (Rakeway House Farm (south of) and Freehay)	**Yes**
		• *If you have answered **'Yes'** to the threshold/criteria **a screening opinion is required** – proceed to Part 2* • *If you have answered **'No'** to the threshold/criteria and the development **is** within/near a sensitive area **a screening opinion is required** – proceed to Part 2* • *If you have answered **'No'** to the threshold/criteria and the development **is not** within/near a sensitive area **a screening opinion is not required**.*	
5	**Conclusion**	**Screening opinion required?**	**Yes**

PART 2 – Are the proposals EIA development? EIA usually required for (i) major developments of more than local importance; (ii) development in particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations; (iii) developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects. This checklist has been prepared with reference to Schedule 3 and Regulation 4 (2) and used to determine whether significant effects are likely to arise from the development. The Regulations also apply to changes to EIA development and reserved matters / subsequent approvals***(ref:*** Schedule 3 - EIA Regulations 2017, Regulation 4 (2) and Planning Practice Guidance – Screening Schedule 2 projects***)***			
1	Applicable screening thresholds/criteria	Does the development fall within the applicable screening thresholds / criteria? (see applicable screening thresholds)	**YES –** The indicative screening thresholds set out in the 'Planning Practice Guidance' for development falling within category 2 (a) quarries– All new open cast mines and underground mines. Clay, sand and gravel workings, quarries covering more than 15 hectares or involve the extraction of more than 30,000 tonnes of mineral per year. Key issues to consider for category - The likelihood of significant effects will tend to depend on the scale and duration of the works, and the likely consequent impact of noise, dust, discharges to water and visual intrusion. The proposals to amend the approved quarry phasing to allow the construction of a new silt lagoon ahead of the original timescale (planning permission SM.EA/5 (Scheme of Conditions dated 29 March 2000 (an Environmental Statement (ES) accompanied this application)). The sequence of mineral extraction would be revised to create a silt lagoon earlier than permitted and the restoration scheme would be modified to achieve a more biodiverse habitat.

	Applicable screening thresholds/criteria continued		The request for the Screening Opinion (letter dated 17 May 2019 from AECOM) confirms the proposal do not seek to change any significant aspects of the site's development or operation. The approved quarry phasing is shown on Working Plan (dwg no. F37fc/78).[The Planning Committee report for SM.EA/5 indicates that it was anticipated the production rate would be 300,000 tonnes per year]. The location of approved silt lagoons is shown on the Silting Scheme plan (dwg no. F37G/64). Having regard to the indicative thresholds/ criteria it is considered that the proposal to amend the approved quarry phasing plans falls within the indicative screening threshold (ref. category 13(a) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017).
2	Characteristic of	Size and design of the whole development:	The quarry is approximately 35 hectares in size.

	the development:	Cumulation with other developments and/or approved development:	The letter dated 17 May 2019 confirms that the quarry is not operational, and the silting capacity is 'virtually full such that additional silting capacity is required if operations are to restart'. Mineral extraction at this quarry has been taking place since the 1960's and the adjacent quarry since in the 1940 (Mobberley Quarry) (under various consents). Planning permission has been granted for the erection and use of sand and gravel processing plant, office, weighbridge and garage building, construction of a new vehicle access, lowering of the quarry floor, erection of a ready mixed concrete plant, use of the land for stockpiling (ref. SM.89/232 dated 24 December 1999).
		Use of natural resources (e.g. land, soil, water and biodiversity:	The proposal would involve the continued extraction and processing of sand and gravel. Significant effects on other resources have already been assessed and reported in the environmental statement accompanying application ref: SM.EA/5.
		Production of waste:	Mineral processing involves the disposal of silt. Paragraph 2.3.8 to 2.2.10 of the ES accompanying(ref. SM.EA/5) details the management of silt produced at Freehay Quarry and also Mobberley Quarry. These sections of the ES indicate that silt from Phases 1 to 5 will be deposited in a silt lagoon situated in Mobberley Quarry (Figure 2.2). Silt from Phases 6, 7 and 8 would be deposited in Silt Lagoon No. 1 (shown on Figure 2.3) and silt from Phases 9, 10 and 11 would be deposited in Silt Lagoon No 2 within Freehay Quarry.

		Pollution and nuisances:	In EIA terms there would be no additional significant effects over and above those originally assessed for the application ref: SM.EA/5, in terms of Visual Intrusion and Landscape Impact, noise, dust, protection of water resources and ecology. Given the existing controls in place it is reasonable to assume that amendments to the site could operate within planning and other regulatory controls (for example Environment Agency pollution controls). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the risk of pollution and nuisances would not be significant in EIA terms.
		Risk of major accidents and/or disasters relevant to the development including climate change:	Given the nature of mineral operations which do not involve complex processes, and, the reasonable assumption that the site could operate within planning and regulatory controls (for example the Health and Safety Executive's Quarries Regulations 1999), it is also reasonable to assume that the risk of major accidents would not be significant in EIA terms.
		Risk to human health (e.g. water contamination or air pollution:	It is reasonable to assume that the site could operate within planning and other regulatory controls and that the risk to human health would not be significant in EIA terms.
3	Location of the development (the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected):	Existing and approved land use (*include past, present and future (allocated land/with permission)*)	Present = quarry until 31 December 2027(Condition 3 of planning permission ref. SM.EA/5) Future = woodland, heathland and wetland (approved scheme dated November 2016 ref. SM.EA/5 107 M D6).
		Relative abundance, availability, quality, regenerative capacity of natural resources (including soil, land, water and biodiversity) in the area and its underground):	It is reasonable to assume that natural resources could be adequately protected utilising appropriate safeguards during operations. The reinstatement of land for sustainable after use is a requirement of current planning permission.

		Absorption capacity of natural environment (in Staffordshire these could include wetlands, riparian areas and forest areas; nature reserves/parks; SSSIs and international designations; areas where EU environmental quality standards have not been met; densely populated areas; landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance):	The site is within a SSSI consultation zone. Natural England has advised that the proposed development is not likely to have any significantly effects on any the features of interest for which the SSSI has been designated. The site also falls within Rakeway House Farm (south of)) Site of Biological Importance and Freehay Site of Biological Importance. The development is anticipated to have minimal impact over and above the permitted operations within the quarry. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the likelihood that the natural environment would not be able to absorb the development is not considered to be significant in EIA terms.
4	Types and characteristics of the potential impact	The magnitude and spatial extent (e.g. geographical area and size of affected population likely to be affected):	The proposal relates to changes to an existing quarry. It is reasonable to anticipate that dust, noise, air quality, water quality, visual and residential amenity, and transport effects can be predicted with a reasonable degree of accuracy and mitigated. It is reasonable to assume that the site could operate within planning and other regulatory controls; and the magnitude and spatial extent would not be significant in EIA terms.

		The nature of the impact:	The nature of the impact of the proposal i.e. visual impact, dust, noise, and on ecology, would need to be carefully assessed. It is reasonable to assume that the proposal could be carried out within planning controls. It is also reasonable to assume that the nature of the impacts would not be significant in EIA terms.
		The transboundary nature of the impact:	Not applicable
		The intensity and complexity of the impact:	The proposal could be carried out in accordance with planning controls and other regulatory controls. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the intensity and complexity of the impacts would not be significant in EIA terms.
		The probability of the impact:	Due the nature, scale, and location of the proposal, it is reasonable to assume that the potential effects can reasonably be predicted and would not be significant in EIA terms.
		The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact:	The mineral extraction, processing and removal from site should cease by 31 December 2025 and restoration by 31 December 2027 or within 23 months of cessation whichever is sooner (Condition 3 of planning permission ref. SM.EA/5).
		The cumulation of the impact with the impact of other existing and/or approved development:	It is reasonable to assume that the cumulative impact can reasonably be predicted and would not be significant in EIA terms.
		The possibility of effectively reducing the impact:	It is reasonable to assume that appropriate mitigation measures could be imposed to minimise the impact of the development.
5	**EIA Development**		**No**

NOT EIA development – the features of the proposed development and measures envisaged to avoid, or prevent what might otherwise have been, significant adverse effects on the environment (Reg 5 (5)(b)).

- Permitted mineral operations have been previously accepted subject to the mitigation of effects by measures required by planning conditions attached to the permission. It is considered that the proposal to amend the approved quarry phasing to allow the construction of a new silt lagoon relates to planning permission SM.EA/5 falls within the indicative screening threshold criteria (ref. category 2(a) of Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations 2017), however due to the nature, scale, and the temporary duration of the proposed amendments to an existing development, it is reasonable to assume that the potential environmental effects can be predicted with a reasonable degree of accuracy and mitigated.

- It is reasonable to assume that the site could operate within planning controls, for example: condition 7 of SM.EA/5 relating to a mineral site transport plan (approved dated SM.EA/5 D1 107 M); condition 12 relating to noise limits; the noise monitoring scheme (required by condition 14, ref. SM.89/232 D4 dated 17 November 2000); condition 16 relating to dust; conditions 17 and 18 relating to blasting and a requirement to submit a blasting monitoring scheme); condition 19 relating to floodlighting and other illumination; and, conditions 21 and 22 relating to groundwater protection).

- It is also reasonable to assume that the site would be required to operate within other regulatory controls, for example: the Environment Agency pollution controls; and, the Health and Safety Executive's Quarries Regulations 1999.

- It is therefore reasonable to assume that in EIA terms no significant effects are likely to arise from the proposed changes to the approved mineral development.

- Overall the mitigation measures are considered to be modest, achievable and monitorable.

	Signed and dated	**Case Officer**	**David Bray** **5 June 2019**	**Team Leader/Team Manager**	**Mike Grundy** **5 June 2019**