

Heritage Statement

Extension to existing Research and Development Facility

**J C Bamford Excavators Ltd, Wardlow / Wredon
Quarry**

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Contents

1.0	The Site and Proposed Development	3
2.0	Planning Policy Context	4
3.0	Heritage Impacts	6
4.0	Conclusions.....	9

1.0 The Site and Proposed Development

- 1.1 Wredon and Wardlow Quarries have been working quarries for the extraction of carboniferous limestone since the 1940s. Planning permission SM.09/14/113 M is the extant permission for the whole site and consolidates six previous permissions. This planning permission allows for two operational strategies. One strategy allows the quarry to operate to a limited extent whereby quarrying activities can take place within the quarries, but with limited stone exportation (less than 1000 tonnes in a 12-month period). This strategy is referred to as the 'interim strategy'. The second strategy allows for the full permitted scheme of mineral extraction (any operations resulting in the export of mineral from the Site of 1000 tonnes or more in a 12-month period) and is referred to as the 'working strategy'.
- 1.2 JCB purchased the sites from Lafarge Tarmac in December 2013, although Tarmac have retained rights under the agreement. It is the intention to continue to use the sites for low-key quarrying and related operations under the Interim Strategy, principally to operate monitor and demonstrate the performance of machinery within the quarry environment in a controlled manner. The quarry is currently operating under this 'interim strategy'.
- 1.3 The JCB operations maintain the integrity and security of the site and creates employment for over 50 people, on sites that would otherwise be left dormant, and supports the research and development of a major international manufacturing company based in Staffordshire, employing approximately 6,000 in the UK, and 11,000 worldwide.
- 1.4 JCB sit at the forefront of construction machinery innovation and are the first large scale manufacturer to develop a range of electric machines. In order to stay at the forefront of future technologies it is necessary to expand the R&D facility at the

Quarry. It is crucial to JCB's ongoing success that they are able to continue to develop machines and test them to 'breaking point'. Without the expansion of the workshop, alongside other developments (tilt table, loading tower etc...) this thorough and robust development and testing regime will not be able to be undertaken or will have to be undertaken at rented test sites at significant cost to the company. The proposed works result in circa £1.4m pounds worth of investment in the site.

- 1.5 There are currently a number of buildings on the site including offices and workshop alongside a VVIP building which allows customers and delegates a view over the quarry bowl and associated test facilities.
- 1.6 As set out above JCB are currently seeking to expand their existing R&D workshop by adding an extension of approximately 610m² of floorspace to include a mezzanine floor.
- 1.7 The extension of the facility will significantly increase the workshop capacity at the site allowing additional technologies to be tested prior to release into the marketplace, as well as providing a safe and secure working environment for JCB personnel.
- 1.8 JCB are currently in the process of providing new testing facilities in the quarry bowl including a tilt table and loading tower and these have recently been granted permission under planning reference SM.20/06/113 M.

2.0 Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** sets out the government's policies in relation to development and the following section is most relevant to this proposal:

Section 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

The following paragraphs should be considered with regards to this proposal:

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF requires that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Paragraph 131 advises that in the determination of planning applications local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 132 advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

Paragraph 134 advises that a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset; this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 137 states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

3.0 Heritage Impacts

- 3.1 The impact of the proposal on the setting of nearby heritage assets, namely the Milepost adjacent to the entrance and Ribden Farmhouse to the south west must be considered as part of this application. The listing descriptions associated with the assets are as follows:

Milepost. Mid to late C19. Cast iron. Triangular section with chamfered top. Top face: "COTTON". Left hand face: "FROGHALL 4½ /CHEADLE 6¼ / HANLEY 14/ STOKE 15". Right hand face: "ASHBOURNE 7¼".

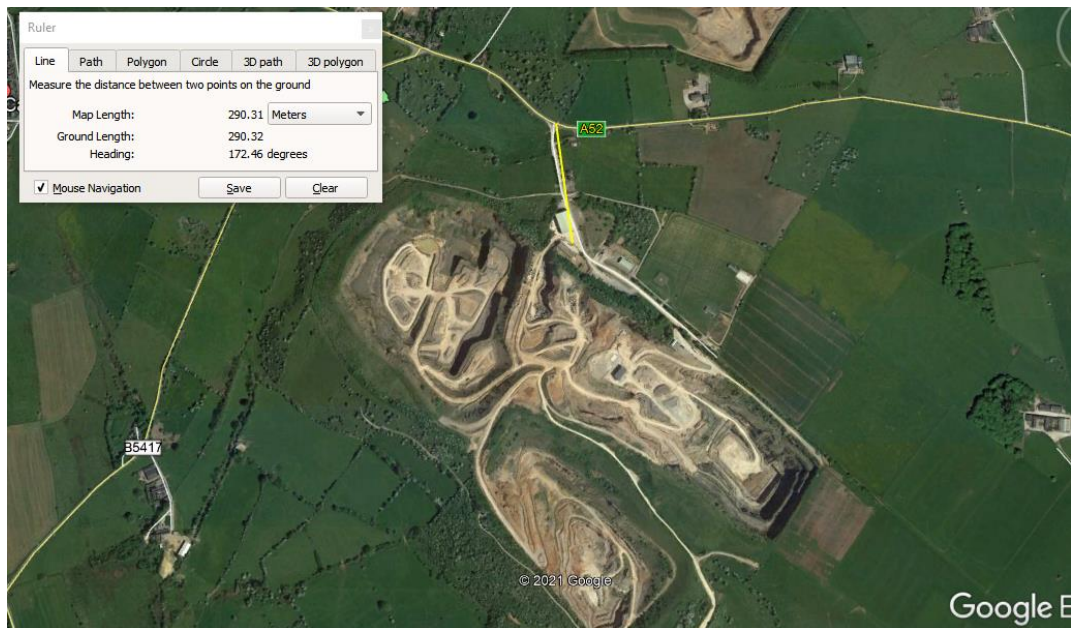
4/141 - Ribden Farmhouse - II IEB Farmhouse. 1748 with later alterations. Coursed rubble and ashlar quoins and dressings with herringbone tooling; plain tile roof; central rock-faced ashlar stack. T-shaped baffle-entry plan, main range aligned east-west facing south and rear wing aligned north-south. 3 storeys, reduced proportions to second floor; 2 bays, C20 top-hung casements in C18 chamfered surrounds, blocked 2-light flat-face mullioned windows to second floor; central door with cambered lintel, door and ground-floor windows have a continuous dripstone. Interior: former inglenook fireplace with stopped and chamfered bresummer, stopped and chamfered ceiling beams.

3.2 In considering the setting of the heritage assets the topography, intervening structures and the separation distances between the application site and the assets are particularly important. As shown on the extracts below Ribden Farmhouse is some 1.1km away from the proposed development, on the opposite side of the quarry bowl and associated infrastructure.

3.3 The Milepost is to the entrance of the site, some 290m from the proposed extension on the opposite side of the existing research and development building which is to be extended.



Map showing location of Ribden Farmhouse



Map showing location of Milepost

- 3.3 In light of the separation distances involved and the presence of intervening features between the assets and what is a relatively minor extension, it is considered that the proposal will have a neutral impact on the setting of the heritage assets. The previously approved Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (application SM.09/14/113 M D1) at the site concludes that *as the distance from the site increases impacts rapidly decrease as the site is well screened by existing vegetation and local changes in topography*. This provides additional evidence that the proposal will have a neutral impact on heritage assets owing to the separation distances involved.
- 3.4 Paragraph 131 advises that in the determination of planning applications local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- 3.5 The impact of the scheme on the setting of the adjoining listed building and milepost has been considered above. This has concluded that the proposal does not have an unacceptable impact and results in no harm to designated heritage assets.

- 3.6 In concluding that there is no harm in policy terms it is not necessary to further consider the test within paragraph 134 of the NPPF which requires less than substantial harm to be considered against the public benefits of the proposal.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 It is concluded that the proposal will not result in harm to any designated heritage asset, in this case the setting of the adjoining grade II listed milepost and Ribden Farm. The scheme is therefore considered to comply with the policy requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.