

CHAPTER 5: THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

- 5.1 Schedule 4, Part 1 of the EIA Regulations outlines the information that should be provided within an ES. This chapter includes a '*Description of the Development*', including in particular:
- *a description of the physical characteristics of the whole development and the land-use requirements during the construction and operational phases;*
 - *a description of the main characteristics of the production processes, for instance, nature and quantity of the materials used;*
 - *an estimate, by type and quantity, of expected residues and emissions (water, air and soil pollution, noise, vibration, light, heat, radiation, etc.) resulting from the operation of the proposed development'.*
- 5.2 This chapter and the accompanying figures define the application areas, the study area, the maximum quantum of development per land use type within the application areas and detailed demolition and means of access proposals. Without prejudice to the ongoing appeal by Laver Leisure, HOW Planning has been instructed to submit this revised planning application which directly addresses all the issues raised within the reasons for refusal of the 2014 planning application. The proposed changes are described at Chapter 1 and reflected in the description of development provided in this Chapter.
- 5.3 The information presented in this chapter forms the basis of the EIA and provides the level of detail required to enable the assessment of environmental effects in line with the EIA Regulations.

Description of the Development

- 5.4 This application re-submission seeks outline approval for a high quality leisure led development on the former Moneystone Quarry site, which lies between the villages of Oakamoor and Whiston, Staffordshire. The vision for the site is to create a high quality destination set within the unique landscape of the former quarry. The proposed development will transform the former industrial landscape into an attractive destination for the region.
- 5.5 Details of the proposed development are described fully in the following sections and in the accompanying Design and Access Statement (Planit, August 2014). However, in summary the proposed development consists of the following key elements:
- Up to 250 lodges;
 - Central Hub building providing a swimming pool, restaurant, bowling alley, spa, gym, informal screen/cinema room, children's soft play area, café, sports hall and shop;
 - Farm shop;
 - Visitor centre;
 - Administration building;
 - Maintenance building;
 - Archery centre;
 - Water sports centre;
 - Equipped play and adventure play areas;
 - Multi-sports area; and

- Car parking and managed footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.
- 5.6 The Indicative Masterplan proposal is shown on **Figure 5.1**. The overall aim of the proposed development is to create a high quality development on a former quarry site, whilst ensuring the maintenance and enhancement of the existing landscape and character features associated with the quarry and the surrounding area. The proposals would deliver a landmark development which is sustainable and complies with national and Local Policy objectives on the use of previously developed land, the creation of employment opportunities and supporting the development of the tourism sector.
- 5.7 Although the Masterplan is indicative only, it is a useful tool with which to develop and agree key development principles for the site for later Reserved Matters applications. It has also been used to make informed assumptions about the likely effects of the proposed scheme. This approach has been confirmed with SMDC. In order to ensure consistency with features of the Masterplan, SMDC may wish to impose planning conditions specifying that reserved matters applications will proceed in broad accordance with the principles of the Masterplan.
- 5.8 The development is defined by the parameters plan at **Figure 5.2**, upon which the EIA is based and with which reserved matters applications must strictly accord.

Application Description

- 5.9 The proposed development is defined in the planning application form as:

"The erection of a high quality leisure development comprising holiday lodges; a new central hub building (providing swimming pool, restaurant, bowling alley, spa, gym, informal screen/cinema room, children's soft play area, café, shop and sports hall); café; visitor centre with farm shop; administration building; maintenance building; archery centre; watersports centre; equipped play and adventure play areas; multi-sports area; ropewalks; car parking; and managed footpaths, cycleways and bridleways set in attractive landscaping and ecological enhancements (re-submission of Planning Application SMD/2014/0682)".

Quantum of Development

- 5.10 The Moneystone Quarry application is re-submitted in outline with means of access and seeks planning consent for the land uses and indicative quantum of development. Details of the exact amount of floorspace to be delivered will be agreed at the reserved matters stage. However, the figures presented in the following table show the range of potential uses and the maximum quantum of development that has been used as the basis for the EIA to present a worst case assessment, unless otherwise stated in a specific technical chapter.

Table 5.1: Indicative Quantum of Development

Accommodation	Description	Indicative Quantum of Development
Lodges	Lodges	Up to 250 units
Leisure Hub Building	Swimming Pool and toddler pool and plant	Up to 415 m ²
	Restaurant/Bar and outside terrace	Up to 500 m ²
	Bowling alley	Up to 140 m ²
	Spa	Up to 150 m ²
	Gym with studio	Up to 100 m ²
	Informal screen room	Up to 80 m ²
	Children's soft play area	Up to 145 m ²
	Café	Up to 70 m ²
	Sports Hall	Up to 320 m ²
	Reception area	Up to 145 m ²
	Shop	Up to 50 m ²
Lake Café	Café	Up to 130 m ²
Visitor Centre	Visitor Centre with farm shop	Up to 490 m ² (including up to 400 m ² retail use)
Archery Centre	Archery Centre	Up to 260 m ²
Administration Building	Administration Building	525 m ² (as existing)
Maintenance Depot	Maintenance Depot	Up to 500 m ²
Substation	Substation	600 m ² (existing compound)
Mini-sports area	Multi-Sports Area	Up to 1,400 m ²
Equipped Play Area	Equipped Play Area	Up to 500 m ²
Woodland Activity Area	Adventure Play Area	Up to 500 m ²
	Ropewalks	Up to 5,000 m ²
Car Parking	Short Stay	Up to 170 spaces
	Secure Long Stay	Up to 150 spaces
	Staff	Up to 67 spaces
	Coach	Up to 5 bays
	Watersports Centre	Up to 26 spaces
Footpaths/Cycleways	Footpaths/Cycleways/Bridleways	-
Watersports Centre	Watersports Centre	Up to 500 m ²

5.11 The Masterplan breaks down into several different character areas, as shown on **Figure 5.3**. These are defined by the individual landscape setting, location, landform and the type of uses or activities. The Parameter Plan (**Figure 5.2**) identifies the land uses zones and height parameters on which the EIA is based.

5.12 The development proposals are described in further detail below:

The Hub

5.13 The central component of the proposed development will be the multi activity hub area. The hub area will provide a range of leisure facilities open and available to the local community, likely including:

- An Archery Centre;
- A visitor Centre, including a local farm shop;
- Lakeside Café;
- The Hub Building;
- Multi-sports Courts;

- Grass activity area;
 - Adventure playground;
 - Ropewalks;
 - Lake boardwalk;
 - Visitor Parking;
 - Coach Parking;
 - Long Stay Parking;
 - Lodge Sales Area;
 - Staff Parking;
 - Administration uses in the existing building to be retained; and
 - A Maintenance Block.
- 5.14 As identified on the Parameter Plan (**Figure 5.2**), zones are fixed for the various proposed buildings within the hub.
- 5.15 The main hub buildings and visitor centre, located to the north of the hub zone, will be up to 2 storeys or 6m above floor level. The main hub building will be located opposite the parking area and broken down into a series of smaller entrances and event spaces that create pedestrian and cycle links between the buildings and surrounding green spaces. The main hub building will contain a number of recreational activities and leisure destinations, likely including:
- An indoor sports hall;
 - Restaurant/ bar and outdoor terrace;
 - 25m swimming pool and toddler area, and pool plant;
 - Spa;
 - Gym with studio;
 - Changing rooms;
 - Sports Hall;
 - Children's Soft Play;
 - Lodge Owner's lounge;
 - 4 x bowling lanes;
 - Informal screen room/cinema;
 - Simulators; and
 - The reception/Admin area.
- 5.16 The archery centre (located within the west of the hub area) and the café (located within the north of the hub area adjacent to the lake) will be up to 1 storey or 3m above floor level.
- 5.17 The admin block and maintenance depot is located within the south of the hub area and will be up to 2 storeys or 6m above finish floor level. This area will provide the administrative and servicing centre for the accommodation facilities. The existing admin building in this area will be retained.
- 5.18 The remaining uses within the hub area will comprise car parking (both visitor and staff parking), landscaping and supporting infrastructure.

Quarry 1

- 5.19 The proposed development is designed to fit within the existing overall landscape structure of Quarry 1, retaining the two lagoons and key visual connections to the northern quarry faces. The western side of the quarry will be set out as a public park space that is focused around the lagoon. In addition to new pathways and seating/decking areas, this area will offer opportunities for new informal play within woodland and managed grassland meadows.

- 5.20 Lodges in this area will be of a maximum height of 2 storeys or 7.5m above floor level.
- 5.21 This area has significant screening from surrounding areas, as such, a mixture of single and two storey lodges are proposed, this will maximise views over the retained lagoons, and views to the south.
- 5.22 Ground conditions dictate a compact area that is suitable for new structures, which has led to placement of new units around the base of the rock faces and the central access roadway. The eastern platform of former settlement lagoon offers a slightly larger area with lodges set into new reed and marginal planting.
- 5.23 In accordance with the restoration plan, a mixture of habitat types are proposed across the area, including reeds and marginal planting around the retained lagoons. Areas of immature woodland scrub and grassland will be retained. The existing native scrub woodland to the base of the rock faces is to be retained.

Quarry 2

- 5.24 New lodge development within the Quarry 2 lower area has been designed to utilise the sloping topography and to integrate with the proposed grassland habitat of the embankments and the wetland of the lower area. Lodges in this area will be of a maximum height of 2 storeys or 7.5m above floor level.
- 5.25 Permeable surfaced pathways link between terraces and into the wetland, with the use of boardwalks that bridge across lagoon areas forming recreational walking/cycling routes.
- 5.26 The existing central stream feature is retained that links to Quarry 1 and this will be reinforced with new native species planting to form a new hedge/woodland connection from north to south.
- 5.27 New woodland will form a visual buffer to the consented Solar Farm area to the east of the quarry, although the change in level between the two areas will mean the panels are not visible from the lodge areas. New planting will be designed and managed so as not to overshadow the solar panel area.

Quarry 3

- 5.28 In Quarry 3 the design of the lodges and other components have been separated into north and south design areas.
- 5.29 The northern lodges will sit on shelves cut out of the quarry walls, and the water sports hub area incorporating water sports building will be located at the eastern edge of the lake at water level. Buildings within the water sports hub area will be to a maximum of 2 storeys or 7.5m above floor level.
- 5.30 In accordance with the restoration plan, the embankments around the lodges will be planted and managed to mature into low lying woodland scrub, with grassland margins around the individual units.
- 5.31 Around the new shallows of the lagoon, marginal areas will be planted to increase biodiversity, and form a softer transition to the embankments.
- 5.32 To the south, the lodges have been laid out to preserve as much of the developing scrub woodland as possible. Exact layout will be subject to further assessment of the existing woodland stock, avoiding key tree groups, specimens or areas of

particular value. A Woodland Methodology that provides a methodology for progressing the detailed design of the development within the new and retained woodland areas of Quarry 3 is provided at **Appendix 5.1**. The purpose of the document is to show how development could progress and how impacts could be minimised. These are intended as a guide only, and will be subject to more detailed analysis during the detailed design stage of the project.

- 5.33 It is proposed that the lodges are positioned immediately off the existing access track with gaps between units that will retain significant areas of planting. Woodland to the front of the lodges will also be retained, maintaining the overall woodland block structure and habitat links.
- 5.34 The proposed access track is laid out over the existing pathway to reduce clearance requirements, with localised widening to allow for passing places, service/emergency access, and permeable surfacing that will allow natural site drainage to continue.
- 5.35 The majority of lodges in Quarry 3 will be of a maximum height of 1 storey or 4m above floor level. As identified on the Parameter Plan (**Figure 5.2**), an area to the south east of the lake is identified for lodges to a maximum height of 2 storeys or 7.5m above floor level.

Black Plantation

- 5.36 The Black Plantation lies north of Quarry 2 and comprises plantation woodland. This area will remain as woodland and be managed in accordance with the approved Restoration Plan.

Landscape/Woodland Activity Area

- 5.37 There are a number of existing areas of woodland located both to the side of the main Hub and within the southern slopes of the site that lead down to the River Churnet.
- 5.38 Proposed uses within these areas include walking, cycling, natural play, high/low ropes course and adventure trails/fitness trails. All of these would involve minimal landscape impact to the existing woodland structure, with sensitive location of pathways and facilities, and 'no dig' construction techniques employed where required.
- 5.39 The woodland areas would be accessible to the general public, and in most cases, be an extension of existing footpaths within the surrounding woodland areas.

Means of Access

- 5.40 Access to the site will be gained from Eaves Lane via the existing access to the Quarry 1 site. This access point is shown on **Figure 5.4**.

Movement Framework

- 5.41 The primary traffic route for all visitors entering the park will be from Eaves Lane, via Whiston. All site traffic will enter at the existing quarry access road.
- 5.42 Lodges will be provided with vehicular access and drop off/unloading parking facilities. However, a long stay car park is provided for guests using the rental lodges, to leave their car for the duration of their stay, if required, and to encourage a largely car free site. This car park will also provide parking for

additional visitors, i.e. friends or family. A visitor car park will be provided for day visitors to use the facilities, including a separate car park in Quarry 3 for the watersports building.

- 5.43 The entire site will be accessible to the general public with unrestricted movement in and out of the site.
- 5.44 At present there are no plans to provide public transport for Moneystone Park, although a shuttle bus link with Alton Towers is under discussion and therefore coach bays for drop off have been proposed.
- 5.45 All proposed footpaths will be for pedestrians/cyclists and a cycle Hub is proposed as part of the Hub proposals. Cycle parking will be provided at each lodge and a cycle park will be provided at each activity/facility.
- 5.46 Future linkages into the existing public footpath network are proposed and have been discussed in the Design and Access Statement. These include additional routes to encourage walking and cycling in the wider area. These public footpaths and cycleways do not form part of this planning application and will likely be included in the s106 agreement and the subject of further planning applications as necessary.

Energy

- 5.47 An energy strategy has been prepared by WSP. A feasibility study was carried out in order to outline which technologies could potentially be included in the development to reduce carbon emissions and generate renewable energy. Photovoltaics, solar thermal, wind turbines, biomass boilers, ground/air source heat pumps, and gas combined heat and power facilities were considered for the proposed development. Of these, photovoltaics and solar thermal panels are considered feasible for the development. These technologies could be applied on the suitably orientated unshaded roofs of the development, and have the potential to significantly reduce carbon emissions. The inclusion of these technologies is to be investigated during the detailed design stage.
- 5.48 The energy demand from non-domestic buildings is deemed to be relatively modest although the swimming pool will generate a significant and relatively constant thermal demand. Gas CHP or biomass boilers are recommended for further consideration at the detailed design stage in relation to this element of the development.
- 5.49 In December 2015, a 5MW solar farm on adjacent land received planning permission (Reference: SMD/2015/0220). Laver Leisure are investigating ways of providing a private wire connection to the site as this would allow for a significant supply of renewable energy whilst potentially protecting the development from rising energy costs. The feasibility of the private wire connection will depend on the technical (e.g. cable distances) and economic constraints of the project. No connection to the facility has been assumed at this stage. Therefore, all matters related to the detailed energy strategy are reserved for future determination in the detailed design stage of the development.

Utilities

- 5.50 All existing utilities infrastructure that was installed for the operational quarry will remain in place. The site currently benefits from 2no. 33KVA supplies and the leisure scheme will only need 1no. 11KVA supply. Accordingly, one of the 33KVA supplies is likely to be utilised for the export of the solar power from the adjacent

proposed solar farm development and the other will be modified/ upgraded to replace dated switchgear as the Leisure scheme is constructed, to provide a reduced capacity of 11KVA.

Construction

Programme and Phasing

- 5.51 The development would be delivered over a 3-5 year period, which is currently anticipated to begin in 2017. Works are likely to begin in the Hub and Quarry 1, with some earthworks progressing in Quarry 3 at an early stage. Development of the lodges would then progress into Quarries 2 and 3.

Demolition Works

- 5.52 No demolition work is required as part of the application as all demolition works are to be carried out as part of the restoration works.

Earthworks

- 5.53 The majority of the site will not require major earthworking following the implementation of the restoration plan. However, a raised area of Quarry 2 will be excavated and used as a capping layer in Lagoons 4 and 7, as defined on the Restoration Plan at Figure 3.1. Furthermore, the northern slope of Quarry 3 will be subject to some excavations to create a development platform and increase stability. The materials excavated will be deposited in the lake at Quarry 3.
- 5.54 Earthworks proposed are as illustrated on the sections shown at **Figure 5.5**.

Site Compounds

- 5.55 The site compound for each phase of development will be carefully positioned to avoid unnecessary visual or noise nuisance to adjacent land users. Due to the prefabricated nature of the lodges, the size of the compounds will be limited for the development in Quarry 1-3. Where traditional methods of construction are employed in the Hub, a larger compound will be required that would include loading, stockpiling and welfare facilities.
- 5.56 It is proposed to utilise the compound areas to offload, store and handle materials as well as for welfare facilities where appropriate. It is anticipated that these will be positioned close to the proposed access points and as remote from existing developed areas as feasible. The location of the compound within each construction site area will enable materials to be offloaded in one controlled area and then moved within the site to the required building area. It is envisaged that strict management of loading zones will be implemented by way of a delivery booking system, which will ensure that material movements are efficiently managed and will also facilitate a 'just in time' delivery regime. Where possible, material movements will be managed to coincide with quiet periods.

Vegetation and Tree Clearance

- 5.57 Where tree removal is required, any trees with the potential to support roosting bats will be subject to survey and licensing procedures by a qualified ecologist. Additionally, tree and hedgerow clearance will take place outside of the bird breeding season.

Construction Methods

- 5.58 The superstructure of lodges will be prefabricated off-site and brought to the site in complete form. The majority of the lodges will be founded on isolated pad foundations. The pads will be taken down to bedrock or at least a firm strata, the material removed would be used to add to the capping of lagoons. Piling may be required on the slopes of Quarry 3 to support the lodges. The piles will need to be steel, drilled and grouted into the rock. However, the detail of the chosen construction method for the lodge foundations will be submitted at the reserved matters stage.
- 5.59 Within the hub, the construction method employed will be dependent on the building level(s). One option is to use simple strip foundations and ground bearing floors that work in a stepped fashion up the slope. These will have a series of levels between the lake side at the top and the car park at the bottom. Alternatively, should a single level be required at lake level then piles will be required. These could be bored, driven or displacement piles. Again, the detail of the preferred construction method will be submitted at the reserved matters stage.

Hours of Work

- 5.60 Working hours will be subject to agreement with SMDC. However, it has been assumed that standard working hours would be followed. These are presented below:
- Monday – Friday : 07:30 - 18:00;
 - Saturday: 08:00 - 13:00; and
 - No working on Sundays or Bank Holidays.
- 5.61 Exceptions may arise, for example when abnormal loads are delivered or when specialist activities are conducted, when works may be required outside of these times. The applicant acknowledges that should these circumstances arise the appropriate permissions and notifications would be sought from SMDC.

Summary

- 5.62 A series of changes have been made to the scheme proposals which directly addresses all the issues raised within the reasons for refusal of the 2014 planning application. This chapter has presented a description of the proposed development re-submission which is supported by a set of parameters plans and drawings. The description and development parameters set out the basis for the assessments described in this ES.
- 5.63 The broad construction principles have also been described in this chapter. The applicant will develop and implement a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the site prior to construction commencing, thereby ensuring that any potential environmental effects are within suitable standards or mitigated where no standards exist. The content of the CEMP will be influenced by the mitigation proposed within the various technical chapters in this ES.