



TRANSPORT NOTE

To: **Cambridgeshire County Council**
From: **Iceni Projects Limited – Transport**
Date: **6th April 2023**
Title: **Station Quarry, Station Road, Steeple Morden, SG7 5RT**

a. Introduction

1. Iceni Projects Ltd has been instructed by BP Mitchell to provide highways and transport advice in relation to Station Quarry, Station Road, Steeple Morden, SG8 0NX.
2. The quarry activities are currently undertaken at two different sites, with the main processing site located to the north, known as Plantation Quarry, and Station Quarry site located to the south where the majority of future chalk will be extracted from. Currently all excavated material is only permitted to be transported by a conveyor running between the two locations. The location of the two sites and the alignment of the conveyor is shown indicatively in **Figure 1**.

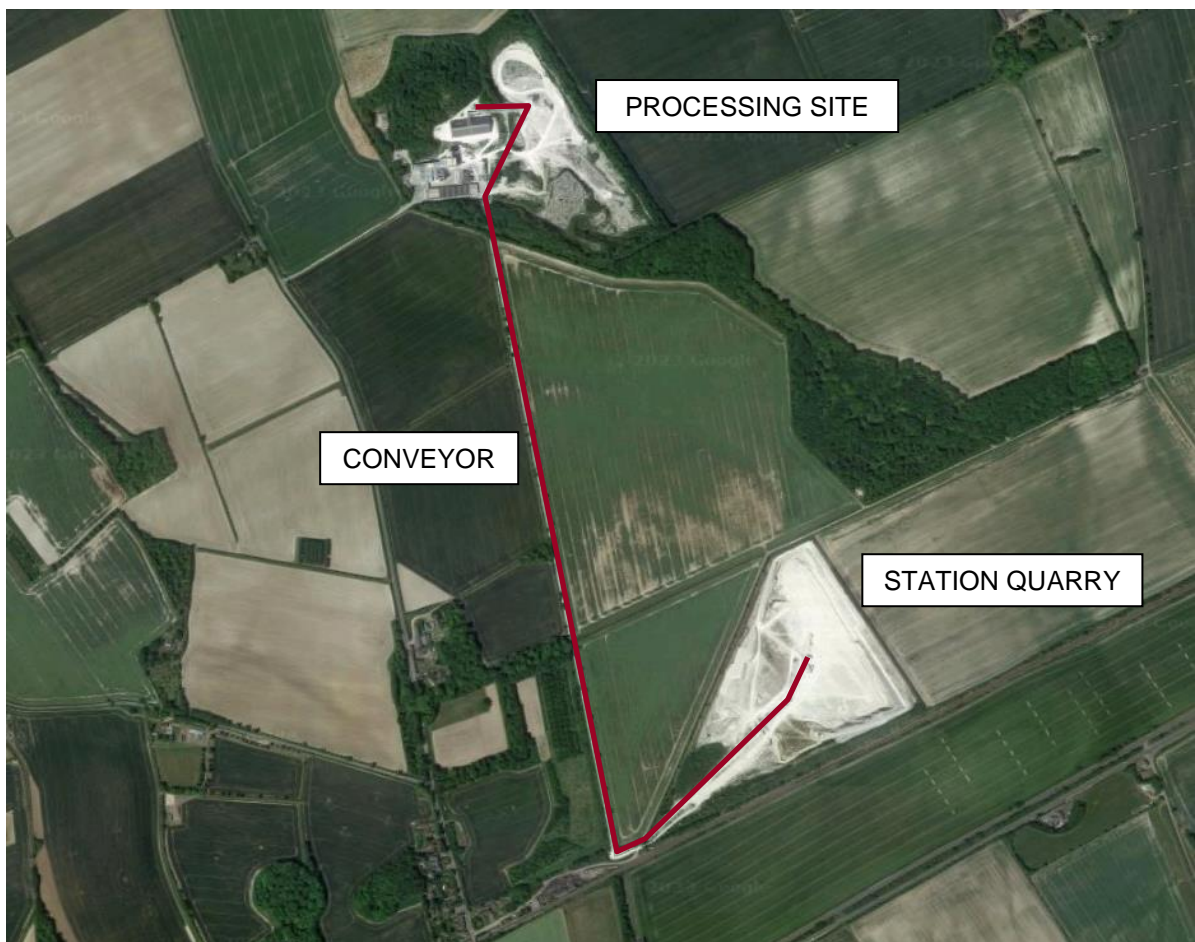


Figure 1 Site Location

- It should also be noted that there are a number of public rights of way (PRoW) running alongside both sites and these are shown in **Figure 2**, which is an extract from the Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) PRoW definitive map. The interaction of these with the quarry are discussed in more detail in **Section c** of this Note.

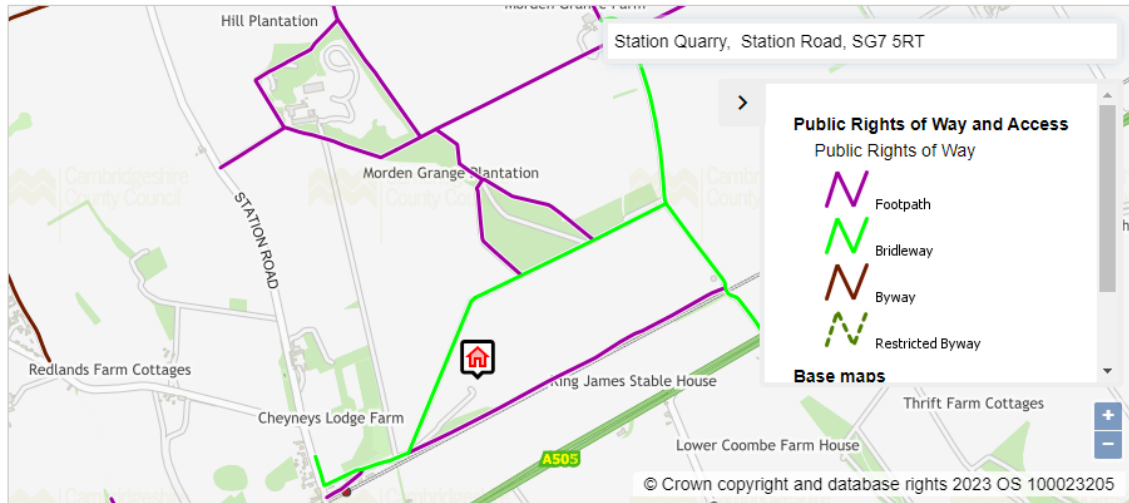


Figure 2 Public Rights of Way

- The current planning permission for the quarry (ref: FMW/080/19) only permits the excavated material to be transported via the conveyor, with Condition 7 Raw Material Transportation stating:

“All mineral and mineral waste arising from Station Quarry as shown edged red on drawing number CCC/SM1 dated December 1999 and received 13 March 2000 shall be transported to Plantation Quarry only via the conveyor.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of residential amenity and highway safety and in accordance with policy CS24 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (July 2011) and policy HQ/1 of the South Cambridgeshire District Local Plan (September 2018).”

- Over time, the conveyor has proven itself to be unreliable due to regular breakdowns and when it stops working, there is no means of transporting chalk from the quarry meaning that all work has to cease in the quarry until such time it can be repaired. Repair times vary but typically last several days.
- As a result, two Section 73 Minor Material Amendment Applications have been submitted seeking to vary Condition 7. One of the applications would enable a single vehicle to be used to transport material instead of the conveyor, as this will provide a more reliable solution, ensuring that material can be transported at all times. The other application allows for single vehicle to be used in tandem with the conveyor for the same reason. It would be our client’s preference for the latter application to be approved, so that a singular vehicle can transport chalk at any time.
- This Note outlines how vehicular transportation of the raw material would operate, the number of vehicles required to transport the current output at peak times and considers the impact that this would have on residential amenity and highway safety referenced in the reason for the condition.

b. Operational Requirements

8. Due to the need to keep the excavated chalk as dry as possible during excavation and transport to minimise drying times before it is processed, the quarry only operates during the drier spring and summer months so for at least half of the year no chalk is extracted from Station Quarry.
9. When mining during the peak period at the height of the summer, approximately 600 tonnes of material could be extracted and transported in a single day. This is currently only permitted to be transported by the conveyor, however, when the conveyor breaks down there is no permitted way of transporting any chalk and mining has to cease having time and financial impacts on the operator.
10. In order to make the process more reliable and efficient, the Applicant is seeking permission to use a 30 tonne tipper lorry to transport the excavated material from Station Quarry to Plantation Quarry utilising the maintenance access road running alongside the conveyor.
11. **Photo 1** shows a section of the conveyor and adjacent maintenance access road running between the two sites.



Photo 1 Conveyor and Maintenance Access Road

12. In order to transport the material, it is proposed that a single 30 tonne tipper lorry would be utilised travelling in each direction along the route in order to avoid the need to facilitate vehicles passing. With only one vehicle travelling between the two sites, a vehicle passing situation would not arise. During the peak mining period at the height of summer, there could be as many as 20 drops a day, which could transport around 600 tonnes of excavated chalk, and therefore 40 two-way lorry movements in the day. These would be spread over a 10 hour period meaning there would be an average of 2 lorries per hour (4 two-way movements) per day at the peak.
13. Relating this to the reasons for the inclusion of Condition 7, the use of the maintenance road by a single vehicle transporting a maximum of 20 loads per day will have no impact on highway safety, as the vehicle will not access the highway at any point between the two locations. On this basis, there will be no impact on the surrounding highway as a result of a single lorry travelling between the quarry and the processing plant and this reason for the condition will not be impacted.
14. With regard to the impact on residential amenity, the route alongside the conveyor does not run past any dwellings, with the nearest house being c.265m from the south west corner of the access route, and also screened from noise and dust by trees to the west of the route and running either side of the PRow to the west connecting with Station Road. Therefore, as no vehicles will be accessing the public highway, it follows that no vehicles will pass directly past the residential properties on Station Road and any impact on residential amenity will be negligible with a maximum of only 4 two-way vehicle movements anticipated per hour- using the access route which is at least 265m away from the nearest dwelling. On this basis, this aspect of the reason for the condition is also not affected.

c. Public Rights of Way

15. As noted in **Section a**, both sites have public rights of way (PRow) running along the boundary, with the processing plant having PRow on all sides. In addition to this, a short length of the PRow crosses the access road. These are considered in more detail within this section. The PRow within the area are shown in **Figure 3**.

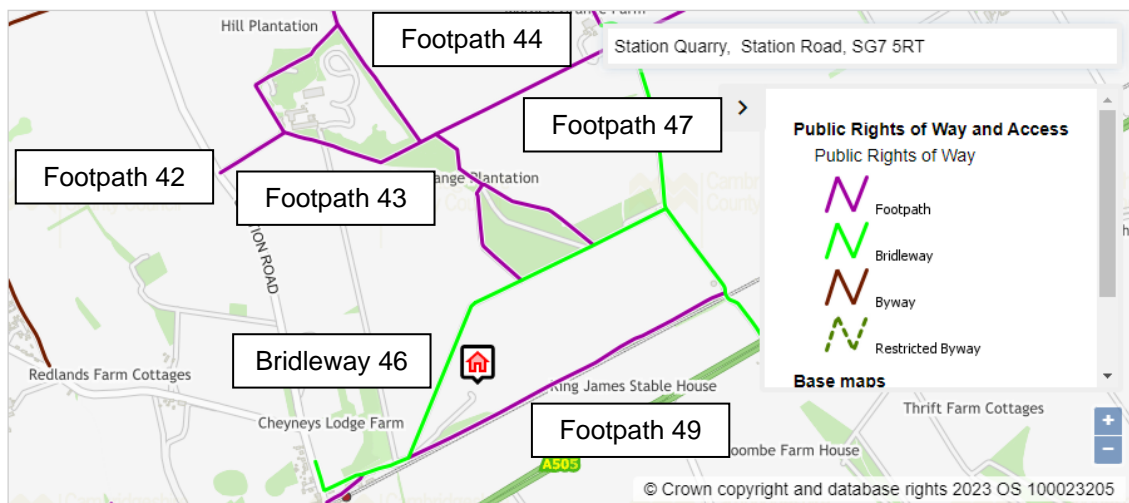


Figure 3 Public Rights of Way

16. While there are a number of different designated routes in the area, the ones closest to the sites, and running across the access road have been highlighted. Of these, the following cross the quarry access route:

- Footpath 43 runs across the northern end of the access road. At the point that the PRoW crosses the access road, two separate gates are provided either side of the footpath. The PRoW continues past the conveyor and a bridge is provided over the conveyor to provide a continuation of the route. This is shown in **Photos 2 and 3**.
- Bridleway 46 and Footpath 49 meet at the point where they cross the access road. Again, the access road is gated at this point. This is shown in **Photos 3 and 4**.



Photo 2 Point at Which Footpath 43 Crosses the Access Road



Photo 3 Footpath 43 Bridge Over Conveyor



Photo 3 Point at Which Bridleway 46 Crosses the Access Road



Photo 4 Point at Which Footpath 49 Crosses the Access Road

17. During a site visit undertaken on 31st March 2023 it was noted that there are no public footpath signs at the points where they cross the access road. Indeed, only three signs were observed between Station Road and the site entrances, one adjacent to the gated access to Plantation Quarry, one on Station Road at the start of Bridleway 46 and one on the entrance to the Ashwell & Morden station car park. After these points, no signage is provided and, particularly in the case of Footpath 49 where it runs along the railway station access and along side the auto repair site, it is not clear that it is a PRoW.
18. In the case of both Bridleway 46 and Footpath 49, it is unclear whether the routes are PRoW where they meet the access road. Bridleway 46 presents as a gated private access and Footpath 49 appears to be the entrance into the quarry.
19. Consideration has been given as to how to ensure that impact on users of the PRoW as a result of the proposed use of the access road is minimised.

20. The first point to note is that the number of vehicle movements will be low, with only one vehicle using the road twice an hour in each direction. This will mean that the likelihood of conflict between the vehicle and users of the PRoW will be very low, with no vehicles using the route for the majority of the day.
21. The second point to note is that the access road is gated where it meets the PRoW. While the gates will likely be left open at times when the vehicle will be transporting material, they will be locked closed at all other times.
22. As neither the access road nor any of the PRoW have hard surfaces the potential for providing a crossing to enhance safety for PRoW users is not feasible. As such, the best way to enhance safety and make all users of both routes aware that they need to proceed with caution is to provide signage.
23. The applicant is willing to provide public footpath or public bridleway signage as appropriate at the points where they cross the access road and on the access road both sides of where it crosses the PRoW 'Caution Pedestrians' signage similar to that shown in **Figure 4** will be provided alerting drivers to the fact that they need to proceed with caution when approaching the PRoW.



Figure 4 Potential 'Caution Pedestrians' Signage

24. As stated, given the low number of vehicle movements associated with the proposed transporting of materials, the provision of signage as outlined above is considered sufficient to enhance the safety of all users of the access road and adjacent PRoW.

d. Summary

25. Based on the foregoing it is considered that there are no highways or transport reasons precluding this application from being recommended for approval.