

**Proposed Land Fill and Restoration Development  
at  
Dockra Quarry,  
Barmill, Beith, KA15 1HG**

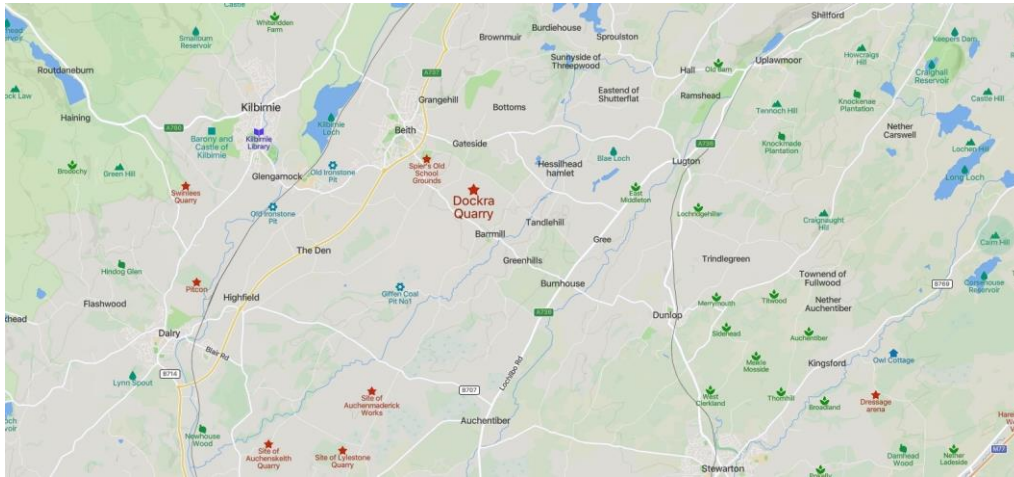
**Barmill Plant Services Ltd**



*Planning Support Statement*

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## Background



Location of proposed development site.

The Dockra Quarry lies approximately 2 kilometres to the south-east of Beith and approximately 1 kilometre to the north west of Barmill. Access to the quarry site is over open agricultural pasture land from the B706, Beith to Barmill road.

The quarry is a dis-used former limestone quarry which has been left unrestored and subject to neglect and natural regeneration. The quarry bowl itself has filled with water to form a kidney shaped waterbody with steep quarry faces to the eastern side. The western side of the quarry is now covered with self generated mixed broadleaf trees and shrubs with a more gradual slope to the water edge.

The steep quarry faces along the eastern side of the site presents a very serious health and safety risk should person or animal fall into the water.

## Historical Background

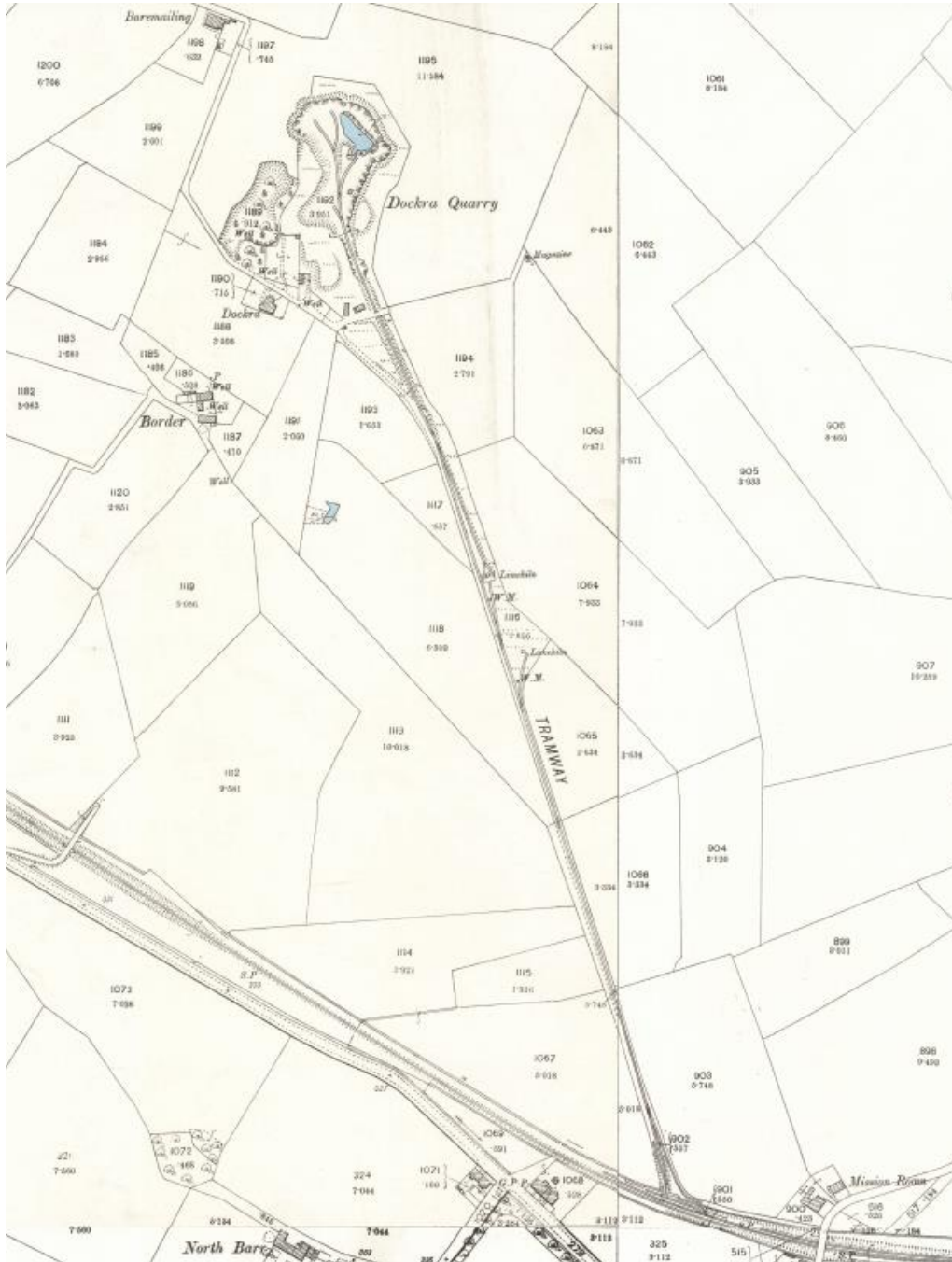
As stated the quarry was a former limestone quarry which was worked from 1873 up until it finally closed in 1958. The limestone was quarried both for industrial use and also for agricultural use when kilned.



This map is dated between 1843 – 1882.

It shows the early recording of Dockra as a limestone quarry accessed by roadway from the north. This access has been abandoned.

As the quarry activities developed and the rail link between Beith – Lugton was built there was a 'tramway' formed which ran from the quarry all the way back to the outskirts of Barrmill and connected to the rail line. This allowed the limestone to be transported to Glengarnock for industrial use.

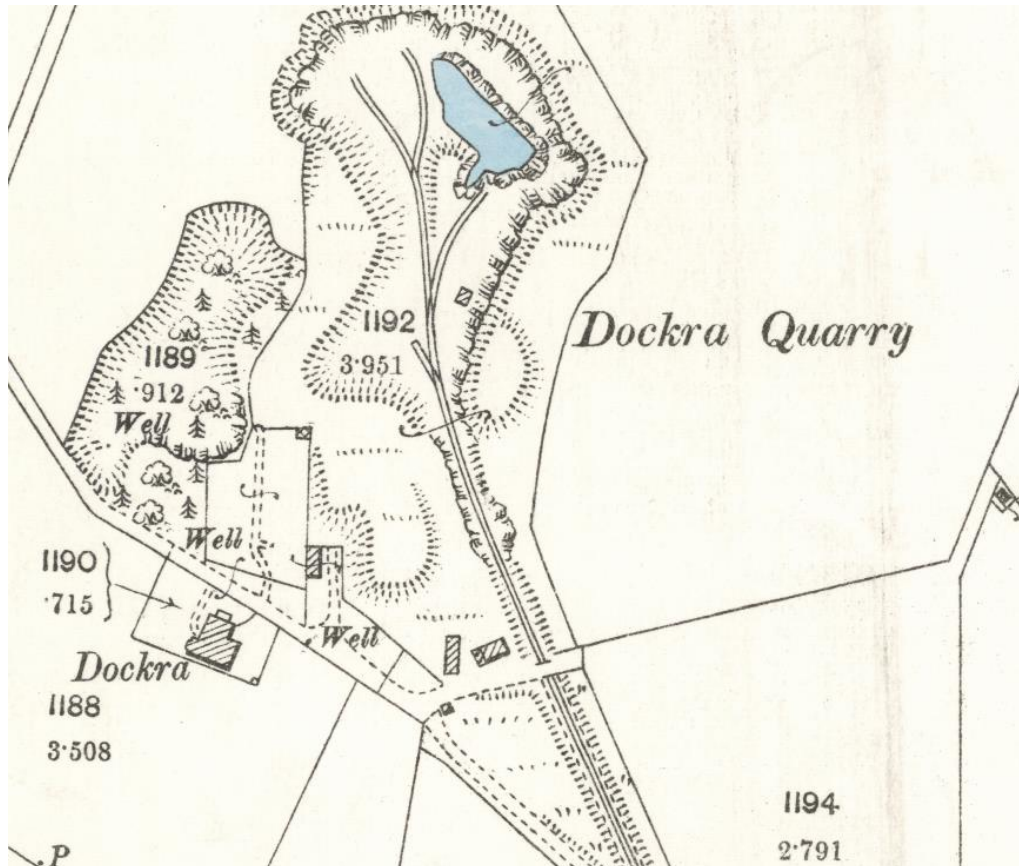


This map is dated between 1892 - 1905

This shows the formation of the 'tramway' link from the quarry to the rail line.

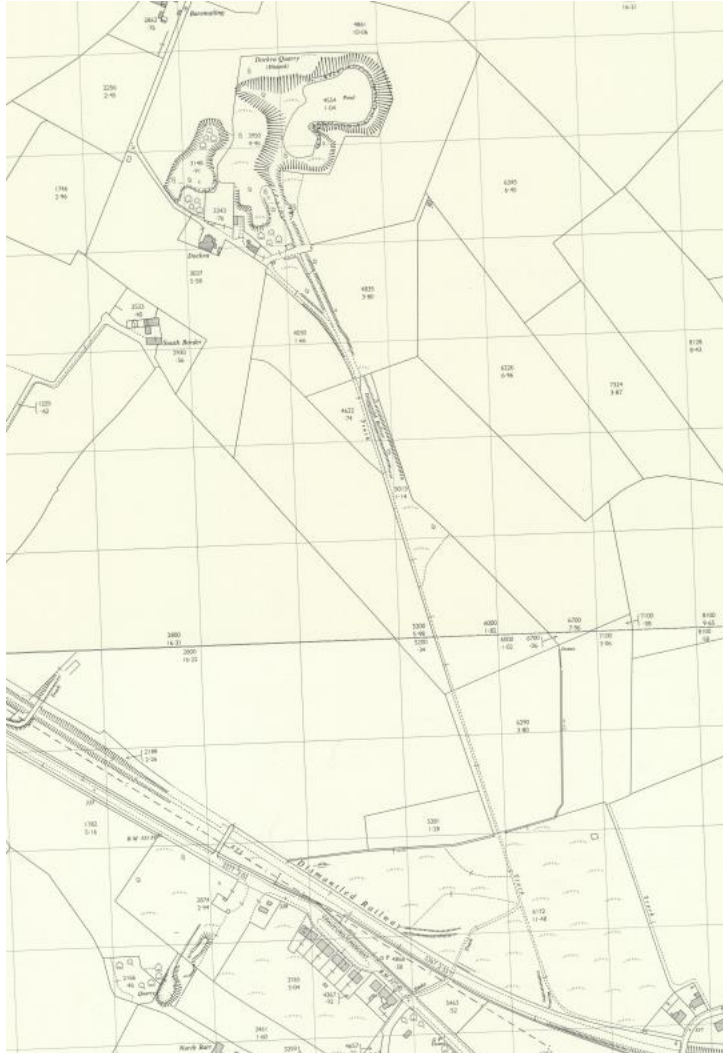
It is also noted that 'Dockra' house is recorded with its own separate access road.





This map is a close up of the quarry with the 'tram lines' in and around the quarry bowl clearly shown

The decline of the quarry is evidenced in the later map of between 1944 – 1971 which shows the tramway removed and the rail line titled 'dismantled railway';



This map is dated between 1944- 1971.  
This shows the rail link between Beith and Lugton as dismantled and the Quarry 'disused'

Several of the maps record the lime kilns and the gunpowder magazines or stores which were associated with the quarry workings. Remnants of these buildings may still be viewed on site along the track leading to the quarry.

It is recorded that the first use of the explosive TNT, developed in Ardeer, was at the Dockra Quarry in 1874.

The quarry site itself has been designated by the North Ayrshire Council as a local nature conservation site.

## Proposed Development.



Aerial view from South.

Barrmill Plant Services Ltd wish to submit an application to fill the quarry void with inert materials. This would remove the health and safety risk associated with the existing quarry whilst providing a much needed location in North Ayrshire for the disposal of inert materials which are unsuitable for re-use in construction or landscaping projects thus reducing transport distances to land fill sites outwith the Council boundaries.

At present there very few land fill sites licensed for the disposal of inert materials within the North Ayrshire Council District. The demand is such that often contractors are required to transport material outwith the district as far a East Ayrshire or Lanarkshire, thus incurring not only additional transport costs but also increasing the level of vehicle emissions which would otherwise be unnecessary.

The provision of a local disposal site would not only be more economical financially providing growth incentive but would also be more carbon friendly with reduced transport emissions.

Following the infill works of the quarry bowl restoration of the site would take place in accordance with the scheme shown in drawing PL 01 . The intended restoration works would entail the formation of two 'shallow' pond areas designed in accordance with best practice from 'fresh water habitats.org' encouraging and supplementing the natural habitat resources for wildlife in the area . The surrounding areas to the ponds would be set to increase the planting of native woodland and wet woodland trees / shrubs. Overall, the

area of tree planting shall exceed that which shall require to be felled to permit infilling works to be carried out.



Close up Aerial view of Quarry bowl.

As stated the site was designated a local nature conservation site under the North Ayrshire Council Local Plan and therefore prior to the development of the design concept the applicant undertook a preliminary ecological appraisal which was carried out earlier this year by the consultancy Envirocentre. A copy of this very detailed report is attached to this statement – Appendix A.

In brief, this report states that despite the mixed natural conditions of the site including water, wetland and mature woodland there was very little or no evidence of evidence of animals such as otter, water vole, badger or brown hare. The report goes forward to provide mitigation measures which could be undertaken to encourage greater wildlife activity to the site with the introduction of suitable planting and the formation of natural and supportive roosts, beds and covers to provide natural food sources as well as weather protection.



## Site Operations

A detailed 'Working Method Statement' has been prepared by the consultants Johnson, Poole and Bloomer who have extensive experience in land fill and reclamation works. A copy of this statement is attached - Appendix B.

Access to the site would be formed utilising the previous 'track line' which ran from the quarry back towards the village with a link across the adjacent field to the existing vehicular access along the Beith road (B706). This would minimise the disruption to natural pasture land and existing hedgerows. It is intended that following completion of the infill and quarry restoration works the existing field would be returned to its natural condition.



View of existing bridge (to be removed).

It is proposed to remove the bridge and to re-align the access road to form a new access to the public road. The new access would be formed suitable to provide two lane access at the junction of the public road with suitable sightline to both directions. The access road would also be tarmac finished with surface water drainage to prevent any materials / water disposing on to the public roadway.

The new access would then allow vehicular access to lead to the quarry site utilising the former 'tram line' and minimising disruption and damage to the existing agricultural lands.

On the site itself the preparation works before infilling would commence with the pumping of the water out of the waterbody. This will be carried out slowly over several days to ensure minimal environmental impact. The areas of the site to be developed will be cleared of vegetation and woodland and any soils within the site will be stripped and placed within the site for use in restoration.

Once the site preparation is complete the infilling of inert materials would commence. The detailed methodology of the material testing and infill works is described in the attached 'Working Method Statement'.

On completion of the infilling works it is proposed to restore the area, the principle objective of the restoration works to enhance the environmental conditions and wildlife habitat creation in the area. As described these works shall include the formation of 2 shallow 'ponds' set within formed and planted native wet woodland and supplemented woodland and grassland planting. The perimeters of the 'ponds' shall be planted to promote ecological and wildlife species.

The aforementioned ecological appraisal by Envirocentre provides a detail mitigation and promotional development account.

Once the restoration works to the quarry site are completed it is proposed to create a local community public access walkway along the line of the former tramline leading from the village to the restored site. Along this path the former lime kilns and the remains of the gunpowder magazines would be retained and visible. It is also proposed that the existing hedge planting would be supplemented together with the creating of new hedgerows along the pathway.

The intention would be to retain and foster the interest in the historical features such as the lime kilns and gunpowder magazines for future generations whilst making safe and enhancing the environmental character of the former quarry site itself..

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Preliminary Ecological Assessment.**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Working Method Statement.**