ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

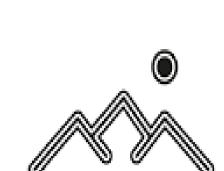
An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is a formal process used to systematically assess the environmental effects of a proposed development. An EIA is currently being undertaken in respect of the proposal.

Consultation has been undertaken with Aberdeenshire Council and an EIA Scoping Opinion provided confirming the scope of works to be included in the EIA.

On submission of the planning application the Environmental Impact Assessment Report will be made available for public inspection through the Planning Authority's website. A Non-Technical Summary of the EIA Report will also be made available.

ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL



The proposed quarry extraction area is confined by woodland blocks to the North and East. Other woodland associated with Craig Castle to the South West and planting to the South of the U97M Wheedlemont Road also visually contains the site. These woodlands restrict potential views of the proposed quarry. The quarry design also includes perimeter screening and reinforcement of the woodland belt on the Northern boundary.

The EIA will include a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that will fully address the effects of the scheme on views, landscape features and landscape character.

ECOLOGY



A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out. This confirms that the site is dominated by areas of dry improved pastures of very low botanical interest.

Effects on ecology will be considered within the EIA. Once the proposed access route is finalised further studies will be undertaken as required.

WATER ENVIRONMENT

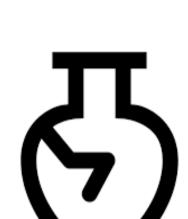


Potential effects upon the water environment will be considered within the EIA. Three piezometers have been installed within the site to record groundwater levels which are currently being monitored on a regular basis.

There will be no discharge from the site to surrounding water-courses, and measures will be in place to prevent surface water leaving the quarry during periods of heavy rainfall.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

There are no known features of historical interest within the site.



There are a number of designated sites in the surrounding area the closest of which are:

- Cnoc Cailliche fort, Scheduled Monument to the North of the proposed quarry;
- The category A listed Craig Castle; and
- The associated sundial and walled garden.
- Tap O' Noth fort, Scheduled Monument to the North East of the proposed quarry.

Potential impacts relate to how any change in view would affect the setting of these features.

An archaeological and heritage impact assessment the site will be included within the EIA. This will assess impacts upon designated heritage sites taking into account mitigation and screening together with the potential for impacts upon unknown archaeology within the site.

NEIGHBOUR CONCERNS



We understand that the people living closest to the quarry will want to know how the proposals will affect them.

The proposal is for a small-scale sand and gravel extraction and processing operation, with low outputs.

DUST



Sand and gravel when extracted is damp and processing is undertaken through a washing plant prior to stockpiling.

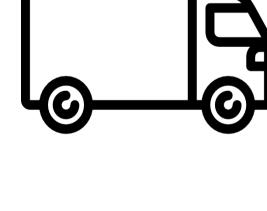
The potential for dust generation is limited by the nature of the operation. It is proposed that the planning application will be accompanied by a Dust Management Plan to formalise good practice measures to control dust at source during operations.



NOISE



TRANSPORT



It is anticipated that upgrade work will need to be undertaken to the B9002 in order to accommodate the proposed additional use of the road by quarry related HGV's. A draft package of improvements has been prepared on behalf of Leiths by Consulting Engineers Fairhurst and will be refined through consultation.

