

ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

The following provides an update on and further detail following the initial consultation event on 28th April.

Roads/Use of the U17 Road Maintenance

Early consultation has been carried out with the Aberdeenshire Council (Roads Development). No concerns were raised over the use of the minor road (U17c) connecting the B977 and the site. It was however confirmed that a Levy would be required towards future maintenance expenditure anticipated on the U17c. The Levy would be agreed with Aberdeenshire Council (Roads Development) and would be index linked. It would normally be based on a rate per tonne of material transported from the quarry. This would be secured by a Section 75 legal agreement.

The verges at the side of the U17c are overgrown and need to be cut back to maximise visibility for road users. Leiths would be willing to carry this out and maintain the vegetation for the period of their operations.

Noise

Specialist Consultants are undertaking a noise assessment and a full noise assessment report will form part of the planning application. Predictions have been undertaken using noise modelling software which confirm that noise levels during operations would meet the most stringent limits for minerals development contained in Scottish Government Guidance.

Ecology

The coniferous plantation woodland located to the south of the Site provides suitable habitat for red squirrel and pine marten. A survey was undertaken and no evidence of these species was identified within 50m of the Site.

There were eight trees that contain Potential Roost Features for bats within the survey area. The trees are located 60-70m from the proposed area of development works and so would not be impacted upon at this distance.

The remains of the stone walls that line the fields within the Site could provide suitable refuge and hibernacula for common toad. The walls would be dismantled by hand and outside the amphibian hibernation period which runs from October to February.

If soil striping and vegetation clearance takes place within the breeding bird season (March to August), a nesting bird check would be completed prior to works commencing.