EIA Quality Mark Case Study

Caysbriggs Quarry extension

Key Issues:
Stephenson Halliday coordinated the EIA process and produced the EIA Report, Planning Statement and Pre-Application Consultation Report submitted in support of the planning application to Moray Council.

The operation at Caysbriggs is considered to be small scale in comparison to conventional aggregate quarry developments. However, an EIA was required due to potential significant environmental effects.

The key sensitive receptors identified early in the process included Lossiemouth Cemetery to the north, residential receptors, including individual dwellings and those located on the edge of Lossiemouth to the northwest and users of the B9103 road which runs along the northern boundary.

Following a thorough EIA Scoping and pre-application consultation process, the EIA focused on potential significant effects associated with Landscape and Visual impacts, Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage and Archaeology, Hydrology, Traffic and Transportation, Noise, Dust and Air Quality and Woodland. No significant effects were identified, following the implementation of recommended mitigation measures.

Purpose of the project:
Tarmac Trading Ltd applied for planning permission for a proposed mineral extraction area to be used in association with the current processing area at Caysbriggs Quarry. Tarmac has been operating at Caysbriggs for over 30 years, and are currently extracting mineral from an extension area to the original quarry.

Description of the project:
The Proposal involves mineral extraction from an extraction area to the northwest of the current quarry development. The development comprised:

- Mineral extracted at a rate of 30,000 – 40,000 tpa with estimated life of 20 to 26 years;
- Extraction over 60 days per year;
- Designed over 11 phases, each covering approximately 1 hectare, with an average of 2 years production per phase; and
- Progressive restoration of the ground profile and planting of woodland which will establish as the mineral deposit is worked.
EIA Learning Outcomes

Lessons learnt:
The EIA and pre-application community consultation process undertaken for the Proposal lead to improvements in the design, including the integration of mitigation measures in order to reduce or eliminate potentially significant effects on the receptors identified above.

Mitigation measures to be implemented include the following:
- A vegetated noise bund to be constructed along the northern and north-western boundary to provide screening in terms of visual and noise effects;
- The 11 extraction phases were designed to allow the vegetated bund and screening planting to establish prior to the extraction of mineral from the phases along the northern boundary, closest to Lossiemouth Cemetery to reduce visual and noise impacts upon the cemetery;

Lessons learnt continued:
- Extraction only taking pace over approximately 60 days of the year (and not during times of burials) to reduce the impact on the cemetery in terms of noise;
- Extraction to be undertaken using only a single shovel-loader only to mitigate impacts associated with noise;
- Excavated material to be loaded directly on to HGVs, with no processing or sorting undertaken at the proposed extraction area to mitigate impacts associated with noise;
- No processing taking place within the proposed extraction area, this will continue at the current processing area away from the site to mitigate impacts associated with noise;
- No HGVs to travel along the B9103 in a westerly direction in order to avoid Lossiemouth to reduce impacts upon the local highway network;
- Progressive restoration taking place which will allow the woodland to establish as operations progress.

The implementation of these mitigation measures resulted in no significant environment effects associated with the extraction of mineral or restoration at Caysbriggs Quarry. Tarmac gained planning consent for the Proposal in September 2018.

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