

CONSTRUCTION OF WATER BOTTLING PLANT AND ASSOCIATED STORAGE
AREAS TOGETHER WITH A NEW ACCESS OFF THE A6, INTERNAL ROADS
AND A VISITORS CLIMBING CENTRE AT COWDALE QUARRY BUXTON.
(Ref. HPK/2009/0723).

SCOPING REPORT
JANUARY 2010

Following the decision by High Peak Borough Council that the above proposed development should be accompanied by an Environmental Statement a request was made to the Council for a scoping opinion on the 29th December 2009. This Scoping Report sets out the applicants views on the items which will need to be included in the Environmental Statement.

THE PROJECT

The project is described in detail in the planning application already submitted (ref. HPK 2009/0723).

SITE LOCATION

The development site relating to the application is part of the disused Cowdale Quarry and is described in detail in the planning application together with location and site plans.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This scoping report has three main objectives:

- To identify the key environmental impacts
- To assist with the design of the project to mitigate any potential adverse impacts
- To inform the consultation process with statutory and non statutory consultees.

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

The Environmental Statement will comply with EU Directive 97/11/EC enacted in the Town and Country Planning (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations 1999. (S1293) and Department Of The Environment Circular 02/99, Environmental Impact Assessments.

The project falls within the definition of an Infrastructure Project as described in paragraph 10(a) of column 1, Schedule 2 of the 1999 Regulations. The need for an Environmental Impact Assessment in these circumstances turns on the likelihood of “significant effects.” There is no general definition of what constitutes significance. The Circular suggests that there are three main criteria of significance:

- Major developments which are of more than local importance
- Developments which are proposed for particularly environmentally sensitive or vulnerable locations
- Developments with unusually complex and potentially hazardous environmental effects.

High Peak Borough Council has confirmed by letter, dated 18th December 2009, that an Environmental Statement will be required for the land due to the size of the development proposed and the sensitivity of the location with regard to adjoining nature consideration issues and its siting in an area identified as having special landscape quality.

SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The Environmental Impact Assessment as set out in the Environmental Statement will ensure that all potential key impacts arising from the development proposals are fully evaluated. Where appropriate, mitigation measures will be proposed to eliminate or reduce adverse impacts.

The Legislation requires only key environmental potential impacts to be evaluated and those relevant to this project are:

- Socio economic effects
- Highways and transport
- Noise and vibration
- Ecology
- Flood risk and drainage
- Air quality
- Visual impact.

SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Socio Economic

An assessment will be carried out on the direct and indirect socio economic effects of the project during the construction phase as well as the ongoing impacts during the operation of the project.

Highways and Traffic

The Impact on transport and movement during construction and operation will be fully considered and recommended mitigation measures where necessary made. A Transport Impact Assessment will be carried out taking fully on board national, regional and local policies. This will include a review of junctions and capacity issues, as well as access by all modes available and sustainability issues. The assessment will include: potential transport related impacts on the local network as a consequence of traffic movements generated by the proposed development during the construction and operational phases; effects of any mitigation measures proposed; sustainable travel issues.

This aspect of the Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and a full Transport Impact Assessment has been submitted with the application.

Noise and Vibration

The potential noise and vibration impact of the proposed development will be assessed for all phases of the development. Existing background noise levels will be established where necessary and mitigation proposed for sensitive areas in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note 24: Planning and Noise. Buildings will be designed to ensure that the operation of the plant will meet any noise level conditions required by the planning authority.

Ecology

The ecological assessment will:

- Identify the existing habitats within and adjoining the site
- Check for evidence of protected species within and adjoining the site
- Assess the potential for protected species to be present in the area
- Identify potential ecological impacts relating to the proposed works
- Identify requirements for further surveys
- Propose mitigation measures to avoid and reduce ecological impacts as far as these can be determined.

The methodology will include a desktop study of recorded protected or notable species within a 2km radius of the quarry and for statutory or non statutory designated sites within a 5km radius of the site as well as a field survey.

The desktop study and an extended phase 1 habitat survey have been completed and included as part of the application.

This part of the Environmental Impact assessment has been carried out and shows no significant effect on the habitats within the proposed site or the designated sites within 5 km.

Flood risk and drainage

An assessment of the impact of the proposed development both on and off site for flood risk will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 25: Development and Flood Risk. The effects of proposed drainage of the site will also be assessed. The site lies within Flood Zone 1 – Low Risk.

This assessment has been carried out and is included as part of the application.

This part of the Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and shows no significant impacts.

Air Quality

The potential impact of the development on air quality will be assessed. The assessment will include potential impacts from the construction phase, the operational phase and from traffic movements.

Visual Impact

An assessment will be made of the visual impact of the development from main vantage points. The assessment will include an analysis of the site and its contribution to the surrounding landscape, as well as an analysis of the appearance of the development.

This assessment has been carried out and submitted within the Design and Access Statement as part of the application.

This part of the Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and shows no significant impacts.

Information is awaited from the planning authority as to any other information it considers relevant.