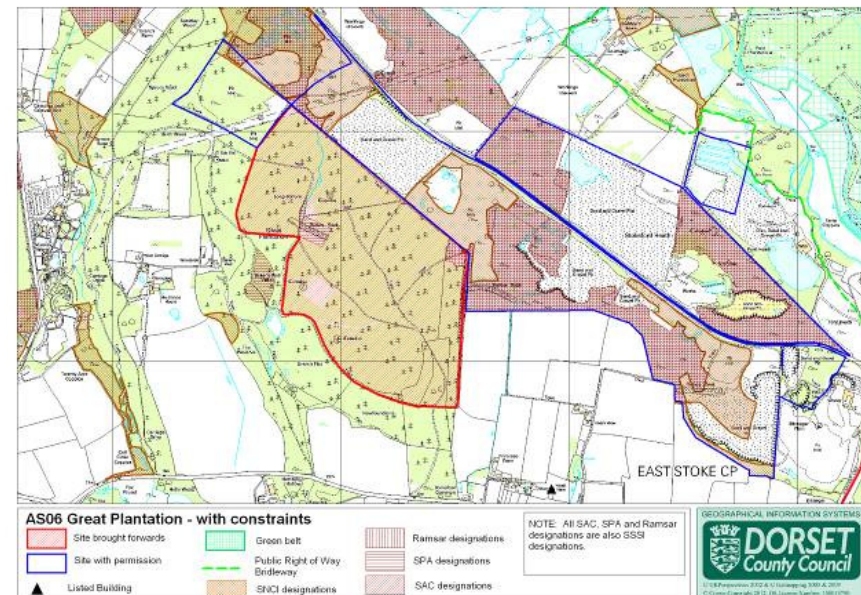
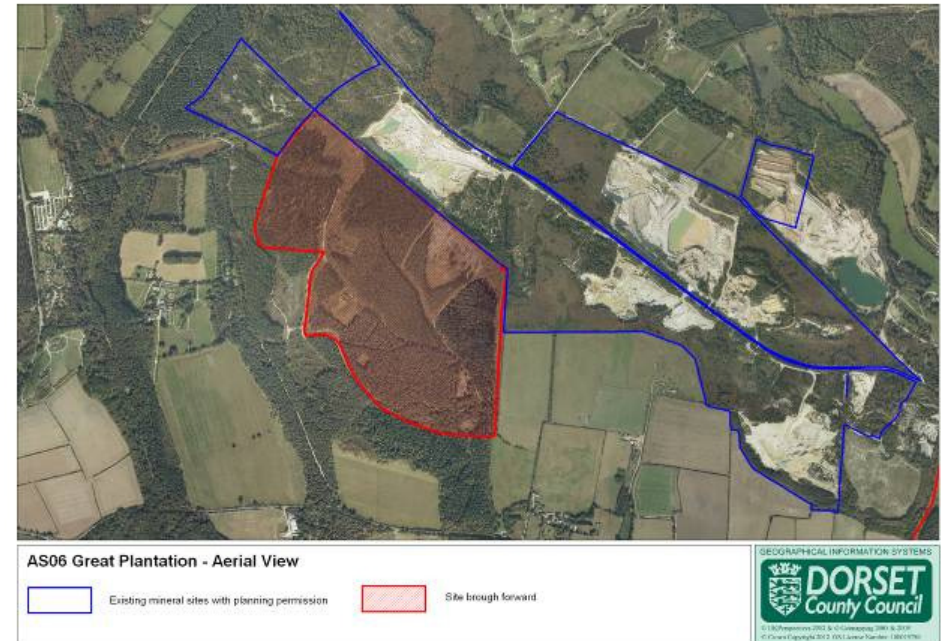


Site Assessment Pro Forma: Great Plantation AS06

Site Information	
Site Location	Great Plantation (land to the south of Puddletown Road)
Grid Reference	SY 860 884
Administrative Area	Purbeck District Council
Parish	East Stoke CP
Site Nominee(s)	Forestry Commission and Hanson
Agent	
Proposed development	Sand and gravel extraction (extension)
Site Area	75 ha
Estimated annual output (tpa)	300,000
Estimated reserve	5.5 million tonnes (inc 1.5mt gravel & 4mt sand)
Expected life of operation	18 years
Existing land use	Coniferous Woodland
Landscape character type	Forest Heath Mosaic
Proposed Restoration	Low level forestry/heathland
Access	From Puddletown Road
Estimated Traffic Movements	No net increase in levels in the area.



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Biodiversity.

Criterion C1 - Impact on European/international designations.

A

Proposed area supports Annex I birds which may be functionally linked to Dorset Heathlands SPA and area is used as recreation site contributing to the network of areas which help to reduce human recreational pressure on designated heathlands, although the contribution of Great Plantation is probably small given its relative isolation from Wool and Wareham. Working this area could lead to significant risk of adverse effects on European sites. At the moment the area includes a small parts of the Dorset Heaths SAC, Dorset heathlands SPA and Dorset Heathlands Ramsar; these areas must be removed from the possible allocation to have any chance of being taken forward otherwise a conclusion of adverse effects on integrity of the sites is inevitable.

Dorset County Council 24.10.13.

Criterion C2 - Impact on areas used by Annex I bird species.

A

Area supports Annex I birds as part of the existing forestry crop rotation. Clearance of trees would result in heathland regeneration and the open habitat would rapidly become suitable for more Annex I birds. The site has the potential to be included in a revision to the heathland SPA boundary. Risk based approach essential here.

Dorset County Council 24.10.13.

Criterion C3 - Impact on national designations.

A

In addition to C1 above, area likely to support rich invertebrate assemblage in existing rides contributing to maintenance of species within SSSI. At the moment the area includes small parts of the Stokeford Heaths SSSI; these areas must be removed from the possible allocation to have any chance of being taken forward as there is no case for directly damaging a nationally important site to extract sand and gravel

Dorset County Council 24.10.13

Criterion C4 - Impact on protected species.

A

Existing rides support significant populations of European protected species, Sand Lizard and Smooth Snake, and common protected reptiles, and populations of reptiles in the small areas of SAC / SSSI within the area are likely to be functionally dependent on the existing rides and open areas in the plantation. Depending on population sizes it may be difficult to mitigate fully for effects on EPS and there is a risk that disturbance licences could be refused by NE.

Dorset County Council 24.10.13

Criterion C5 - Impact on local recognitions/designations, including ancient woodland and veteran trees.

A

There are possible adverse implications for the Stokeford Heaths SNCI to the north of the proposed area, although through assessment it should be possible to avoid adverse effects on the SNCI.

Dorset County Council 24.10.13

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Geodiversity

Criterion C6 - Impact on geodiversity.	D
No specific scientific gains or geodiversity enhancements are likely but the exposures may be of interest to the quaternary and tertiary research associations. Provision should be made so that it will be possible to arrange such visits on request.	
Dorset County Council 24.10.2013	

Landscape

Criterion C7 – Impact on designated landscapes.	B
Significant adverse impact	
Dorset County Council 23 October 2013	

Criterion C8 – What is landscape capacity to accommodate proposed development.	A
It is considered that there may be an issue regarding cumulative landscape and visual impacts in relation to the existing workings in the area and in this well used and sensitive part of the AONB. The site is enclosed by woodland on all sides apart from its eastern edge. Development would not significantly affect the local landscape and visual context (outside the site), but would affect views from the Purbeck Hills; it would extend the extent of quarrying onto the south facing side of the ridge of land running along Puddletown Road, extending the potential visibility of quarries in this area to a wide area of landscape to the south, including the AONB. However, if the developer can provide modified proposals that do not cause significant harm to views from the Purbeck Hills, and evidence to demonstrate the effects on these views, the capacity of this site could potentially be increased.	
Dorset County Council 26.11.2012	

Criterion C9 – Impact on historic landscapes.	C
Much of the site, with the possible exception of the lower part of Baker's Well Valley, would have been heathland before the woodland was planted. This heathland formed part of the setting of the Scheduled Monuments referred to in C11. Unsympathetic extraction and quarrying could have a significant negative impact on the setting of these Monuments, but there is the potential for an improvement in that setting through restoration to heathland.	
Dorset County Council 4/11/2013	

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Historic Environment

Criterion C10 – Impact on historic buildings.

C

The nearest listed building is Heath View which appears to have a view of the site across fields. Restoration of the site should restore landscape texture and qualities thus the impact is time limited on this building.

Assessment C Less significant impact – time limited.

Dorset County Council 22/10/2013

Criterion C11 – Impact on archaeology.

A

B

C

Four scheduled monuments lie within the boundary of the proposed site. They are located approximately in a line that is oriented north to south. From the north they are SM28379 (a bowl barrow), SM28382 (a section of Battery Bank), SM28380 (a bowl barrow) and SM28381 (another bowl barrow).

The three barrows are set on the ridge that runs to the east of Baker’s Well Valley. It is assumed that they would have been deliberately placed in these prominent positions at a time when the land cover would have been heathland rather than woodland. The barrows would have been clearly visible from the valley as well as other vantage points in the wider landscape. There is also a water course that runs through the valley and it is likely that the barrows would have been deliberately placed overlooking this. To the east of the barrows, the land is level with no clear edge to the ridge.

Since a major part of the setting of the barrows essentially comprises the ridge and the valley to the west, it is important to preserve these landscape elements

A section of Battery Bank is also present within the valley. Whilst the section to the east of the track appears well-preserved, the section to the west appears to have been lost. Battery Bank is thought to have consisted of sections historically to act as markers separating the Frome Valley from land to the north. It is unclear whether this section of Battery Bank was placed alongside the barrows deliberately or not.

Theoretically, extraction that destroyed the Scheduled Monuments would be category A, but the protection afforded to them and their setting means that much or possibly all the site should be excluded from such quarrying. In my opinion, serious consideration needs to be given to whether any quarrying here is feasible – through assessment and evaluation that considers the Scheduled Monument and their settings and also the impact on other below-ground archaeology. Continuing dialogue with English Heritage is also important.

If a compromise can be determined that allows some quarrying within a fraction of this site, the impact could perhaps drop to category C.

Dorset County Council 4/11/2013

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Water and Flood Management

Criterion C12 - Impact on hydrogeology or groundwater.**A**

Stream rises within the brought forward area – a score of 'A' applies. Developers will have to demonstrate how potential impacts on hydrology could be mitigated.

Environment Agency 27 February 2013 Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Criterion C13 – Impact on surface waters.**A**

There are watercourse(s) running through the site – score of 'A' applies.

Environment Agency 27 February 2013

Criterion C14 - Impact on flooding or coastal stability.**E**

Entire site and surroundings is outside of FRZ 2 and 3. No impact from or on flooding score of 'E' applies.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Land and Soils

Criterion C15 - Impact on existing soils or land type (including BMV land).**D**

The site is primarily forestry land, no impact on agricultural land.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Air Quality

Criterion C16 – Impact on AQMAs.**D**

No direct impact on AQMAs, score of 'A' applies.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

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Economic development

Criterion C17 - Impact on economic development.

D

As a relatively large aggregate site, this site nomination would provide significant on-going benefits to the local and wider economy; it will maintain local employment during working and the restoration to forestry/heathland will have some on-going benefits also. Score of 'D'.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Human Health and Amenity

Criterion C18 - Impact on Sensitive Human Receptors.

D

Closest residences approximately 200m to the west, others within 250-500 m buffers around site, including Hethfelton House. Site is relatively isolated from residences and has the potential to be well screened. With further mitigation (noise attenuation and visual screening bunds) impacts on surroundings should be minimal. Dust should not be an issue, and lorry traffic will not have any particular impact on these properties.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Criterion C19 - Impact on existing settlements.

D

Stokeford lies within approximately 400m of the site, while Wool and Bovington Camp are over 1km distant. The site is unlikely to have any impact on any of these sites. Lorries would travel northwards to the A35 and in so doing may have some impact on Bere Regis. Transport impact is considered separately. A score of 'D' is considered appropriate.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

Airport Safety

Criterion C20 - Impact on airport safety

E

Site is over 25 km from Hurn Airport and is to be worked and restored dry. No impact on airport safety.

Dorset County Council 16 October 2013

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Cumulative Impacts

Criterion C21 - Effects on cumulative impacts.	B
<p>The proposed site would be an extension to current Hanson workings. If the development of the site were timed such that it acted as a replacement for current operations, it would not represent an intensification and would be rated 'B' as it is located in an area of mineral extraction and waste management. If it is to be worked concurrently with other Hanson operations it would be rated 'A' as an intensification.</p> <p>There are no significant housing or employment allocations in the Purbeck Local Plan Part I (adopted Nov 2012) within 5km of the proposed site.</p> <p>Dorset County Council 16 October 2013. 23 October 2013.</p>	

Carbon Emissions

Criterion C22 - Impact on carbon emissions	B/C
<p>Although conveyors might be used on the site to move material to the processing plant, all material would be removed from the plant by road.</p> <p>Dorset County Council 16 October 2013</p>	

Recreation/Access

Criterion C23 – Impact on recreational land	D	E
<p>Although there are no formal rights of way or formal recreational uses on the site, as Forestry Commission land the site is available for public access. This would change during working but after restoration the site could be open to public access again. Site could have a 'D/E' rating.</p> <p>Dorset County Council 16 October 2013</p>		

Criterion C24- Impact on public rights of way	D	E
<p>There are no public rights of way over or adjacent to the site, and no impacts on public rights of way. Post-restoration it may be possible to create new rights of way/access over the land,</p> <p>Dorset County Council 16 October 2013</p>		

Site Assessment Pro Forma: Great Plantation AS06

Criterion C25 - Are the access proposals acceptable	C	B
<p>This proposal is for a large extension to an existing operation south of Puddletown Road. It is expected that an existing access would be used although it may be possible to provide a new access as long as it met the required visibility, geometry and surfacing requirements. Access to the strategic network is gained via the C6 and Bere Regis to the west or via the A352 and A351 to the East. It is expected that the proposed extraction will follow cessation of other work on neighbouring sites and that the estimated 120 trips per day will therefore not be an increase over existing trip generation.</p> <p>If the proposed site comes into operation after other works cease so that there is negligible increase in traffic then the site would have a C rating. However, should the site come forward in parallel with current operations, there will be increased impact and the site would be considered to have a B rating. When the site comes forward, detailed traffic information will need to include vehicle routing and a consideration of impact along those routes.</p> <p>Site rating if started following cessation of other extraction: C Site rating if operated in parallel with existing extraction: B</p> <p>Dorset County Council 29 October 2013</p>		