



**Application No:** 06NP0056

**Proposed Development:** Application to vary the planning permission to extend the life of Cop Crag quarry by 15 years, Cop Crag quarry, Byrness

**Applicant Name:** Northumberland Stone Ltd

**Agent Name:** The Land and Development Practice

## 1. Proposal and Site

### The application

- 1.1 Planning permission is sought to vary condition number 2 of planning permission 91/E/432 with respect to the time limitation for extraction of sandstone from Cop Crag quarry. Permission was granted for the continued extraction of sandstone and for the extension of the workings on 2.1 Hectares of land at Cop Crag quarry near Byrness on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1991 for a period of 15 years. Condition number 2 of that permission states:

“This permission is granted for a period expiring on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2006, when the extraction operations shall cease, the site shall then be restored to forestry (or as otherwise agreed) in accordance with an approved restoration scheme within a further 12 months.”

This application seeks the variation of condition number 2 to extend the life of the planning permission for a further 15 years to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. It is likely that working will not be completed before the end of this period however, and that a further application for an extension of time will again be sought in 2021.

### The site

- 1.2 The application site (“red line”) for the current application is the same as the site survey plan for the previous planning permission for this site, reference 91/E/432. The site is surrounded on all sides by conifer plantation, and working has been in a northward direction as per drawing SLSL CCQ3, submitted in accordance with condition number 18 of permission reference 91/E/432, and away from the road (A68). Access is off the A68, where an unmade track leads for approximately 50m between conifers to the site. The access off the A68 has been widened in accordance with condition number 14 of permission reference 91/E/432. There is a locked gate part way along the access track to prevent unauthorised vehicular access. There is no perimeter fence however.

### The Quarry

- 1.3 The quarry has a single bench face, incorporating levels 1-4 shown on drawing SLSL CCQ3, running in an arc north west to south east with a variable height between 10m and 15m. There is a considerable volume of reject stone in heaps around the edge of the extraction area. The extraction area is largely clear of vegetation but the un-worked areas are covered in heather with young conifers. The access road splits and runs around either side of the extraction area, avoiding an area, including a prominent tree, which is safeguarded under condition number 19 of permission reference 91/E/432. To the north of the extraction area the track around the quarry joins up with a forestry track running through a break in the forest. There is no perimeter fencing around the site. The workings are largely dry, with no significant or permanent areas of water. There are currently no fixed plant, machinery or buildings on the site.

### The Location

- 1.4 The site is located within the western edge of Redesdale Forest, approximately 3km to the north west of Rochester and 2.5km to the south of Byrness, immediately adjacent to the A68. The nearest residential property is 800m to the south west at



Blakehopeburnhaugh. It is approximately half a kilometer (a third of a mile) from the boundary of Otterburn Training Area.

The stone

- 1.5 The sandstone is from the Carboniferous Limestone Series and provides a masonry stone, which is particularly good for decorative features due to its fine grained texture, yellow/pink colour and resistance to weathering, which means it can be finely cut and hold a clean cut edge. The stone has been used in new buildings such as Victoria Gardens Shopping Centre in Harrogate, the Rutland Building in Edinburgh, and the Medical School in Glasgow. The stone has also been used in the restoration of historic buildings such as Durham Castle, and Durham Prison Administration Buildings. The applicant states that there is currently substantial interest in Cop Crag stone for use in prestigious public buildings in Scotland.

Method of Working

- 1.6 The applicant proposes to continue extraction by working benches 5 to 7 in a north and east direction as shown on drawing SLSL CCQ3. The applicant has stated that operations would be undertaken using a single hydraulic backactor, which would include recovery of whatever soils can be recovered from the area above the face. Other mobile plant including a small dump truck may be brought in when necessary. Blocks would be levered off the face using mechanical means. Occasionally it would be necessary to loosen the blocks with blasting. At maximum production levels the applicant estimates that between 10 and 20 blasts would be required each working day. The applicant proposes that the hours of working would be 7.30am to 6.30pm on weekdays and Saturdays. No working would take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays. Working would only take place on between 6 and 16 weeks each year. Updated detailed working and restoration plans would be submitted for approval by the Authority as required by conditions attached to a new planning permission. In addition to controlling the pattern of working and the requirement for a restoration plan, conditions attached to permission reference 91/E/432 currently control the environmental effects of the working with respect to visual screening, noise, dust, blast vibration, traffic, highway safety, and the protection of surface and ground water. Run-off within the quarry area is generally directed into the quarry floor.

Production levels

- 1.7 Condition number 12 of permission reference 91/E/432 states that not more than eight lorry loads of stone shall leave the site during any working week. This equates to approximately 200 tonnes per week (between 1 and 2 loads per day) during operational periods. In 2006, stone movements off-site would have taken place over approximately 3.5 weeks. The stone is removed by flat backed HGVs, and it all goes southwards down the A68 into County Durham. The stone is taken to Dunhouse Works at Staindrop near Barnard Castle in County Durham, where it is sawn to specification and supplied to the user. The annual tonnage removed from the quarry has varied between 0 and 900 tonnes per annum – well below the maximum amount that could potentially be extracted under the terms of planning permission reference 91/E/432. Extraction has generally coincided with specific orders for the stone, and work has been sporadic with long intervals with no working, as the following table shows:

2002	763 tonnes
2003	0 tonnes
2004	0 tonnes
2005	383 tonnes
2006	680 tonnes
2007	900 tonnes



- 1.8 Approximately 45,000m<sup>3</sup> (90,000 tonnes) of gross stone reserves remain. Net reserves will be significantly lower because the percentage of reject stone is around 50%. Given current transportation costs it is not financially viable to re-use waste stone for walling or garden purposes. In any case this would lead to an undesirable expansion of activity, including the need to process the stone on site. Two people will be on site when the quarry is operational and they either lodge locally or travel up daily in a light van from Staindrop near Barnard Castle. A maximum of two drivers would be engaged in transporting the stone to Staindrop. Occasional movements of a fuel tanker and fitters vehicles may also occur.

#### Restoration

- 1.9 Current proposals would be for reject stone to be placed on the western side of the quarry to begin to form the western restoration slope, which will become a patchwork of soil and bare rock. Heather brash and bracken litter would be sought to establish an upland heath habitat. The applicant proposed that when the faces reach their maximum extent the quarry floor will be lowered to 256.4m aod, a total of 3m, working as a single face. This would be 1m above the water table thus ensuring the quarry floor remains dry for most of the time although it may well hold some water during wet periods. The completed north and east faces will be shaped to include ledges and scree to provide nesting places for raptors and cliff nesting birds. At up to 14m in height the faces would provide a protective habitat. The applicant suggests that a condition is imposed requiring the submission of a detailed restoration and aftercare scheme five years after the date of the planning permission, given the fact that the quarry is likely to be active for at least the next 15 years.

#### Statutory designations

- 1.10 The site is located in an area which is not subject to any designation identified on the Proposals Map for Northumberland National Park Local Plan, nor on the Proposals Map for the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. It is identified as Moorland Forestry Mosaic in the Landscape Character Assessment of Tynedale District and Northumberland National Park by Julie Martin Associates, 2007. This document does not have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document though it is a material planning consideration. The LCA identifies this area as having a diversity of trees of varying age and species with broadleaved trees along burns. Recommendations include the replacement of Sitka with mixed planting, encouraging the ongoing restructuring of existing coniferous woodlands to diversify their structure, soften their outline and enhance their nature conservation value. The site has no designations as being of nature conservation or archaeological importance. An ecological assessment has been sought by the applicant to consider the impacts of the development on habitats and protected species within the site and to recommend appropriate mitigation measures. No public rights of way would be affected. The Pennine Way National Trail passes approximately half a kilometre to the west of the site. The site does sit within land designated as Access Land under the Countryside and Rights of Access Act 2000, and managed by the Forestry Commission.

#### Environmental performance

- 1.11 As evidence of the operator's environmental credentials monitoring reports by the County Council for four other sites owned by Dunhouse Quarry Works (Blaxter, Bearl, Cat Castle and Dunhouse) have been provided. These show that no significant environmental problems have arisen at these sites. The operator is willing to provide a marker stone which could be engraved at the Staindrop Works if this is wanted by the local community as a community benefit.



EIA

- 1.12 This application has been subject to a Screening Opinion under The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999. The proposals fall within the description at Paragraph 2 of Schedule 2 of the 1999 Regulations. Taking into account the selection criteria listed in Schedule 3 of the Regulations, it is not considered that the proposed development would have a significant effect on the environment. This Authority has therefore determined that the proposed development is not development for which an Environmental Impact Assessment would be required.

**2. Planning Policy**

2.1 National Policy:

Minerals Policy Statement 1: Planning and Minerals, November 2006

Minerals Policy Statement 2: Controlling and Mitigating the Environmental Effects of Minerals Extraction in England, March 2005

Mineral Policy Guidance 7: Reclamation of Mineral Workings 1996

Mineral Policy Guidance 14: Review of Mineral Planning Permissions 1995

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development, 2005

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas 2004

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation, May 2006

2.2 RSS:

42 Overall minerals strategy

2.3 Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan:

NP1 Presumption against mineral working in the National Park unless in exceptional circumstances

NP4 Impact on Landscape

NP16 Impact on Local Economy

NP17 Impact on Tourism and Outdoor Recreation

NP19 Traffic and Highways

NP21 Cumulative Impacts

NP23 Operators Environmental Performance

NP24 Community Benefits

NP32 Re-use of sandstone waste

Appendix A Code of Practice

Appendix B Reclamation

2.4 Northumberland National Park Local Plan

C1 Impact on Landscape

C10 Impact on Trees

C11 Impact on the Water Environment

CD1 General Development Principles

CD2 Landscaping

**3. Planning History**

- 3.1 Reference 82/E/091 – Extraction of sandstone at Cop Crag quarry – granted conditional permission.



- 3.2 Reference 91E432 – Continued extraction of sandstone and extension to workings on 2.1 Hectares of land at Cop Crag quarry – granted conditional permission 19<sup>th</sup> November 1991.
- 3.3 Condition number 18 of permission 91/E/432 states:  
“A detailed plan of the precise working arrangements for each yearly period of operation of the quarry shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority. The first such plan shall be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> April, 1992 and at two yearly intervals thereafter. Such plans shall show areas and levels of extraction, areas for storage of soils, waste stone and block stone and shall also show woodland to be felled.”
- 3.4 Drawing SLSL CCQ3 received by the Authority 10<sup>th</sup> June 1991 was submitted pursuant to condition no.18 of 91/E/432, and this was modified by a succession of 2 year working schemes. The last of these was submitted in August 1992 as drawing NT02524/004 dated July 2002. No plans to show the working arrangements have been submitted since that date.
- 3.5 Condition number 21 of permission 91/E/432 states:  
“The site shall be restored to forestry (or other acceptable use) in accordance with conditions 2 or 3 above and a detailed scheme to be submitted to and approved by the Mineral Planning Authority within 5 years of the date of this permission. Such scheme shall include:
- i) the date by which restoration shall be completed;
  - ii) the nature of filling material to be used in the different parts of the site for restoration;
  - iii) the method and timing of each part of the restoration;
  - iv) the progressive spreading of quarry waste and means of compaction and forming levels;
  - v) the even re-spreading of soils or soil making materials;
  - vi) the final levels of restored land, which shall be such as to allow for natural drainage, and be compatible with the levels of the adjoining un-worked land;
  - vii) the provision of fencing and the planting of trees on site and any measures necessary for the protection of such trees.
- 3.6 Whilst a restoration plan (Drawing NT02524/003 dated December 2001) was submitted in June 2002, there is no record that this plan was approved in writing by the Authority as required by condition number 21.

#### **4. Consultations/Representations**

- 4.1 Rochester and Byrness Parish Council: None received.
- 4.2 Tynedale Council (Planning): No observations.
- 4.3 Tynedale Council (Environmental Health Dept): No objections.
- 4.4 Northumberland County Council (Minerals Waste and Development Control): No objection. However the Monitoring Officer has raised concerns regarding the submission of information by the applicant in the past. “On a number of occasions information has not been provided on request. A restoration scheme for the site is overdue and many of the submitted plans are of a poor quality. I would therefore recommend that you request any outstanding information to be submitted prior to the determination of the application.”
- 4.5 Environment Agency: No comments.



- 4.6 Natural England: No objection on grounds of likely impact on landscape. The scheme will be unlikely to have significant effects on the landscape, subject to advice provided. No outstanding concerns with respect to impact on access/recreation. There are outstanding concerns regarding the potential impact on species especially protected by law, and further information should be provided. They also have outstanding concerns with regard to impact on Biodiversity Action Plan habitats and species/habitats and species of principle importance. Further information should be provided to demonstrate whether or not the proposals would have an impact on BAP habitats and species. The proposals do not appear to raise any significant agricultural, soil resource protection or associated reclamation considerations.
- 4.7 Northumberland Wildlife Trust: None received.
- 4.8 Highway Authority: I refer to the above planning application which was replied to on 26<sup>th</sup> Oct 2006 and would comment as follows: I have visited the site recently and note that there continues to be mud deposited on the highway and the access track up to the site was also noted to require cleansing. There is a drain across this track which directs surface water off the track and to the side but the effectiveness of this is in some doubt. Also the cundy across the entrance was in need of cleaning out. The sight lines to either side on to the A68 were in need of clearing and cutting back to improve visibility. The verge opposite was noted to be suffering from overrun due to large/long vehicles entering the site. I have no objection in principal to the proposed development but request conditions be attached to any consent granted with respect to wheel cleaning, sheeting of lorries leaving the site, the repair of damage to the road verge and cundy.
- 4.9 NNPA Landscape and Ecology: No ecological objections as long as some landscaping takes place afterwards and that it is agreed with us. On the original permission (91/E/432) it was stated that a tree marked "A" should be retained, as should all the trees to the south. I ask that this condition be restated. During recent discussions with the British Geological Society they have pointed out the importance of Northumberland sandstone for building stone and have quoted several buildings in Scotland and the north of England using the stone. It is well known for its quality and colour as stated in the application. It is also important to match stone when renovating buildings, not only for colour but also because all sandstones have different mineral contents and the same type is needed so it will weather and move in the same way. I would therefore agree about the important nature of the stone from the quarry.
- 4.10 Further comments following receipt of the Ecological Assessment and Natural England's response above: I have now had a look at the ecological report that accompanies this application and have spoken to Natural England and seen their response. I agree with NE that issues surrounding protected species have not been fully examined in the ecological report. Species such as great crested newts and red squirrels are mentioned but the discussion about the risk to them is not completely explored so therefore the decision not to survey for them is not explained fully. I think that the risk to great crested newts is very low as there are no records in the area and the habitat is not ideal – the ecological report should have made this more explicit and, if this is the case, drawn the conclusion that a survey was not necessary. Similarly more details about the risk assessment for other protected species such as bats, water voles and red squirrels are required.
- 4.11 NE also made reference to BAP habitats and in particular upland heathland - a small amount of this habitat would be lost if the quarry were extended. The amount should really be put in context in terms of the surrounding habitats and that in Northumberland.



In my opinion it is a very small area, and the site would be ideal for restoration of this habitat after operation, indeed there is already some regeneration. I think if permission is granted we should make a condition that restoration of upland heathland is included in the restoration plan, together with open water and ledges as alluded to in the report.

- 4.12 Looking at the response from BGS and from knowledge of the geology in the Park, this sandstone quarry is obviously an important source of distinctive stone. We have targets in the geodiversity action plan to allow for small scale quarrying and also targets to encourage the use of local stone. Extending the use of an existing quarry does seem to fit with these objectives as long as the issues above can be sorted out.
- 4.13 NNPA Archaeologist: No archaeological constraint.
- 4.14 NNPA Access and Recreation: None received.
- 4.15 NCC (Minerals and Development Control): No detailed comments. Policies in the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan stipulate that there must be an overriding need for the development before it is permitted. There appears to be little information in the supporting statement to demonstrate such an overriding need for sandstone from this quarry.
- 4.16 Ministry of Defence: None received
- 4.17 Forestry Authority: None received.
- 4.18 Sabic (owner of nearby Wilton – Grangemouth Ethylene pipeline): No observations. The pipeline is situated 850m to the west of the quarry.
- 4.19 HSE: None received.
- 4.20 Public Response: None received.

## 5. Assessment

### 5.1 The main issues are:

- Principle of Development
- Impact on landscape
- Impact on residents' amenity
- Impact on protected species
- Impact on the water environment
- Access, traffic and parking
- Impact on the local economy, tourism, outdoor recreation and public Rights of Way
- Operator's environmental performance
- Community or environmental benefits
- Restoration and aftercare

### Principle of Development

- 5.2 Policy NP1 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan states that proposals for minerals working in the National Park will not be permitted unless, following the most rigorous examination, there are exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that:



- the proposal is in the public interest
- there is an overriding public need for the development, in terms of national mineral supply or impact on the local economy
- the cost of and scope for providing sources of supply from outside the National Park and for meeting the need in some other way has been examined and no suitable alternative is available
- the natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage and special qualities of the area would not be adversely affected
- the proposals would have no undue affect on the environment or the landscape, taking into account any mitigation measures

5.3 The applicant has provided examples, cited in paragraph 1.5, where Cop Crag sandstone has been used in the construction of new buildings and for the restoration of historic buildings. This sandstone quarry is an important source of a distinctive stone. Targets in the geodiversity action plan allow for small scale quarrying and includes targets to encourage the use of local stone. Extending the period of use of this quarry would accord with these objectives.

The proposals would therefore accord in principle with Policy NP1 of the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

#### Impact on landscape

5.4 The proposal would extend the time period of the planning permission and not the site area. The application site would remain unchanged from the 1991 permission. The site is not visually prominent in the landscape. In fact it is very well screened by the surrounding conifer plantations, to such an extent that the site is not readily seen at all from any public vantage points. The retention of surrounding conifer plantations is outwith the control of the quarry operator, however the National Park Authority does have an opportunity to comment on applications for felling licenses to the Forestry Commission. The application would present the opportunity to secure an updated restoration plan for the site to upland heath, which would better fit with the recommendations of the Landscape Character Assessment for the area. With respect to the landscape impact of the proposal the development would accord with Policy NP4 of the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

5.5 The continued operation of this site would not adversely affect the quality and character of the landscape, and therefore would not conflict with Policy C1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. The applicant has indicated an area of trees which would be retained within the site on the topographical survey and on the restoration scheme, and a condition to secure this is recommended. The removal of other small self seeded trees from within the site as part of the phased extraction of stone would not have a significant impact on the landscape because of their generally small size and the fact that they are surrounded by much larger trees in a dense conifer plantation. A condition is recommended to secure the retention of a significant group of trees within the site, similar to the previous permission. Thus the proposal would accord with Policy C10 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. As part of a restoration scheme the Authority would seek the appropriate planting of native plants in accordance with Policy CD2 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

#### Impact on residents' amenity

5.6 The applicant has considered that because of the method of working proposed no noise reduction measures would be necessary. They state that the use of a single machine,



dust suppression measures consisting of watering the roadways when necessary, the hiring of a road sweeper as necessary, and the use of radiator fan deflector plates and upward facing exhausts on vehicles and mobile plant would adequately mitigate the potential impact of dust. Blasting, using the method proposed here, at other quarries operated by the same operator has failed to register any vibration. It is considered that the small scale of the quarry, its intermittent working, the small amount of traffic associated with the site and the distance to the nearest residential properties would result in only a small degree of disturbance to local communities, and it would not significantly adversely affect their living conditions.

- 5.7 The cumulative impact of this site together with other mineral sites in the area, and the cumulative impact of long term quarry working on the quality of life for local residents are relevant considerations. Saffron is the only other quarry in the immediate area, and this is another old site which has been worked intermittently by the Forestry Commission. Planning permission has now lapsed at Saffron, and therefore the cumulative impact of Cop Crag together with this site is no longer an issue. Cop Crag was worked before 1939 and was subsequently used on an occasional basis by the Forestry Commission to provide stone for forest tracks. The National Park Authority granted permission in 1982 for the quarry to be re-opened, permission was renewed in 1991, and an extension to the time limitation for a further 15 years is the subject of the current application. In relation to other features in the immediate vicinity such as activity associated with the forestry industry and activity on Otterburn Training Area, Cop Crag has had, and would continue to have, a minimal impact on local residents despite its longevity. The cumulative impacts of the proposal would not conflict with Policy NP21 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan therefore.
- 5.8 Conditions are recommended to ensure that the development would proceed in accordance with the Code of Practice set out in Appendix 1 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. These would set out controls with respect to the hours of working, lorry numbers and routes, noise, blasting, dust, smoke and fumes, water, mud and debris.

#### Impact on protected species

- 5.9 The ecological assessment has not fully addressed why certain species were not surveyed, and therefore the developer has not yet satisfactorily demonstrated that protected species would not be adversely affected by the proposals. The area of upland heath affected by the development is already affected by the existing quarry. No additional area is proposed as part of this application. There would therefore be no additional loss of this habitat, other than the area which is already the subject of the 1991 permission. Conditions to secure the sites restoration would allow this habitat to be re-established and this application is an opportunity to update the requirement for a restoration condition.

#### Impact on the water environment

- 5.10 At present the workings are generally dry with water ponding against the face in two areas on occasion. However the proposed direction of working is down, to a level 1m above the water table. A condition was imposed on the previous planning permission reference 91/E/432 stating that there should be no extraction below a level of 258m aod, except in accordance with details to be submitted and agreed with the Mineral Planning Authority. Further work by the developer has established the level of the water table and that a level of 256.4m aod would be 1m above this. A condition is therefore recommended that there should be no extraction below 257m aod in order not to breach



the water table. Surface water drainage from the site into watercourses is controlled under other environmental legislation. The development would thus accord with Policy C11 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

Access, traffic and parking

- 5.11 The site access has been widened some years ago in accordance with the previous planning permission to improve highway safety for lorries accessing and exiting the site. The Highway Authority now recommends that a wheel cleaning facility be provided on site and a condition is therefore recommended, similar to that on the previous planning permission. The A68 is a primary route, and it is well within its capacity to accommodate the relatively small amount of traffic associated with this site. Conditions are also recommended to repair and strengthen the highway verge and cundy at the entrance of the site. Thus the development would accord with Policy NP19 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

Impact on the local economy, tourism, outdoor recreation and public rights of way

- 5.12 The continued operation of this site would contribute towards the retention of two operatives and two drivers jobs. Staff and equipment are brought in as required from County Durham, so whilst not directly benefiting the economy of the immediate area to a significant degree, the continued operation of the site would contribute to the economy regionally. Accommodation and service providers in the immediate vicinity would continue to benefit from the quarries presence to some degree. The application would therefore accord with Policy NP16 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.
- 5.13 The small scale of operations at the site and the fact that it is so well screened visually, minimises the impact of the site on tourism in the area. The application would not therefore conflict with Policy NP17 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.
- 5.14 No public rights of way would be affected by the proposals.

Operator's environmental performance

- 5.15 Information has been provided on the operator's environmental performance in the form of monitoring reports for four other quarries operated by them in the region. A generalised working scheme has been provided, as set out in paragraph 1.7 above, based on details submitted pursuant to the previous planning permission. A restoration scheme was submitted though never approved by the Authority and this application presents an opportunity to secure a restoration plan that would be appropriate to the site and which would meet the objectives of the BAP and LCA. Details of the day to day management of the site have been provided, and a condition is recommended to secure the provision of an up to date scheme of working for the site. Thus the proposal would not conflict with Policy NP23 of the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

Community or environmental benefits

- 5.16 The developer has offered to provide a community benefit in the form of a stone to mark the entrance to Byrness, which they would be willing to engrave. The proposal would thus accord with Policy NP24 of the Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.



Restoration and aftercare

- 5.17 As stated above a generalised working scheme has been submitted. Conditions are recommended to ensure that working practices would accord with the Code of Practice set out in Appendix 1 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. These set out controls with respect to the hours of working, lorry numbers and routes, noise, blasting, dust, smoke and fumes, water, mud and debris.
- 5.18 Detailed restoration and aftercare proposals should include an assessment of the existing landscape and a practicable scheme showing how the reclaimed site will be assimilated into the landscape, details of phasing, filling, landforms, drainage, pollution prevention measures, management of soils and landscaping, arrangements for the effective aftercare of the site, progressive reclamation, measures to enhance the environment such as the retention or creation of woodland, hedgerows, landscape features, wildlife habitats and geological exposures, and provision for public access, if appropriate.
- 5.19 Policy NP32 encourages the re-use of sandstone waste. There is a significant volume of reject stone in heaps around the quarry, and it is proposed to re-use this material in the restoration of the site. It would not currently be viable to remove this waste stone for any alternative uses such as garden or walling stone in any event. The proposal thus would not conflict with this Policy.

**6. Conclusion**

- 6.1 The continued extraction of sandstone from Cop Crag for a further period of 15 years would ensure the continuity of supply of this high quality distinctive stone in accordance with Policy NP1 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. The impact on the landscape would be small. Subject to a condition to ensure the protection of a group of trees within the site the proposal would accord with Policy C10 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. Subject to conditions the continued small scale of the quarry operation would not significantly adversely affect the living conditions of nearby residents in accordance with Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. The cumulative impact of the continued operation of the quarry together with other quarrying, forestry activities and the proximity of Otterburn Training Area would not have a significant detrimental impact on the special qualities of the National Park. Conditions would ensure the working scheme for the site and the final levels of the quarry would minimise the impact on the water environment and habitats to an acceptable degree, in accordance with Policy C11 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. Conditions would secure improvements to the site access in accordance with Policy NP19 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan. The continued operation of this site would contribute to safeguarding the employment for a small number of quarry workers, it would continue to contribute to the local and regional economy, and it would not have an adverse impact on tourism in the area, due to its small size, in accordance with Policy NP16 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. The operators environmental performance has been acceptable in accordance with Policy NP23 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan and they have offered a community benefit in accordance with Policy NP34 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan. A condition requiring the submission of a detailed restoration and aftercare plan is recommended to supplement the generalized plan submitted, and this would utilize the extensive quantities of waste stone on the site, in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.



## **RECOMMENDATION**

Subject to the receipt of additional information to supplement the ecological report and which overcomes Natural England and NNPA Ecologist's concerns, give authority to the Chief Executive (National Park Officer) to grant conditional permission:

1. The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in complete accordance with the approved plans, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To enable control to be exercised over the development as it proceeds.

2. This permission is granted for a period expiring on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, when the extraction operations shall cease, the site shall then be restored to upland heath in accordance with a restoration scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority within twelve months of the date of this permission.

Reason: In the interests of the proper development and restoration of the site in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

3. In the event of the extraction ceasing for any reason before 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the Mineral Planning Authority shall be notified in writing of the date of cessation of operations and the site shall be restored in accordance with approved details within a further 12 months.

Reason: In the interests of the proper development and restoration of the site in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

### Site Working

4. Extraction, restoration and any other working operations shall only take place between the hours of 7.30am and 6.30pm, Monday – Saturday. Except for any machinery required for the purpose of continuous drainage, no operations shall take place on Sunday, Bank or Public Holidays.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy NP21 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

5. All fuel, oil, lubricants, solvents or paints on site shall be contained within a bunded container, with a capacity of at least 110% of the volume of the stored materials.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the water environment in accordance with Policy C11 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

6. No waste materials from outside the site shall be deposited within the site.

Reason: In the interests of the proper development and restoration of the site in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

7. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order), no plant, machinery, stores or buildings shall be provided at the site, without details first being submitted to and approved in writing to the Minerals Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy NP21 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.



8. Blasting shall only be carried out on working days, between the hours of 2pm – 3pm, unless otherwise first agreed in writing by the Minerals Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy NP21 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

9. Not more than eight lorry loads of stone shall leave the site during any working week and a record shall be kept of the number of lorry loads leaving each day: such record shall be made available for inspection by the Minerals Planning Authority upon request.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area, in accordance with Policy NP21 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

10. A detailed plan of the working for the site, including phasings and timings, shall be submitted to the Mineral Planning Authority within twelve months of the date of this permission. The working scheme for the site shall accord with the approved details. The working plan shall include areas and levels of extraction, areas for the storage of soils and soil making materials, waste stone and block stone.

Reason: In the interests of the proper development and restoration of the site in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

11. In this condition “retained tree” means Tree A together with trees in the protected area shown on plan C7812/2a dated Sept 2006; and paragraphs (a) and (b) below shall have effect for the duration of this permission.

(a) No retained tree shall be cut down, uprooted or destroyed, nor shall any retained tree be topped or lopped other than in accordance with the approved plans and particulars, without the written approval of the Mineral Planning Authority. Any topping or lopping approved shall be carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998 (Tree Work).

(b) If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

(c) The erection of fencing for the protection of any retained tree shall be undertaken in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority within twelve months of the date of this permission, and shall be maintained until extraction operations and restoration works cease. Nothing shall be stored or placed in any area fenced in accordance with this condition and the ground levels within those areas shall not be altered, nor shall any excavation be made, without the written consent of the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the appearance of the area, in accordance with Policy C10 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

12. No extraction of stone shall take place below a level of 257m aod unless otherwise prior agreement is received in writing from the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of protecting the water environment in accordance with Policy C11 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.



Restoration:

13. The site shall be restored to upland heath in accordance with a scheme to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority within twelve months of the date of this permission. The restoration scheme shall include:
- i) the date by which restoration shall be completed
  - ii) the nature of filling materials to be used in restoration
  - iii) the timing and phasing of each part of the restoration
  - iv) the means of spreading, compacting and finishing the levels
  - v) details of the areas to be covered by soil and subsoil, including their depths
  - vi) details of drainage and habitat re-generation measures
  - vii) the provision of fencing, tree planting, and aftercare for the site

Reason: In the interests of the proper development and restoration of the site in accordance with Policy NP32 of Northumberland National Park Minerals Local Plan.

14. Within three months of the date of this permission, details of a wheel cleaning facility and its siting shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The wheel cleaner shall be retained in the agreed position for the duration of the works.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and amenity, in accordance with Policy NP19 of the Northumberland National Park Mineral Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

15. All loaded wagons visiting or leaving the site shall be sheeted at source or otherwise treated to prevent the spread of dust/debris on to the highway.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy NP19 of the Northumberland National Park Mineral Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

16. Within six months of the date of this permission damage to the highway caused by traffic associated with the site shall have been made good, with damaged areas repaired in accordance with a scheme which shall first have been submitted to and approved by the Mineral Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. In particular, detailed consideration shall be given on the submitted plan of a proposal to strengthen the west side verge of the A68 to one metre wide with 350mm thickness of granular sub-base mot type 1 for a distance which will include the turning circle of long vehicles entering and leaving the site. Also the gully across the entrance will be included for repair as well as the drain across the access road.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and highway safety in accordance with Policy NP19 of the Northumberland National Park Mineral Local Plan and Policy CD1 of Northumberland National Park Local Plan.

17. Within 6 months of the date of this permission a new vehicle access to the site shall be constructed in accordance with Northumberland County Council standard specification for a Type 6 Commercial crossing with 6metre radius and details are submitted to and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority of a proposal to maintain the verges to a satisfactory standard to preserve the sightlines in a safe condition. Also a sign shall be placed on the A68 in both directions indicating WORKS ENTRANCE, this to be paid for by the developer but details should be agreed with and the sign installed by the Traffic Management section of the Highway Authority.



Reason: To achieve access to and from the site in a manner which does not cause significant danger and inconvenience to other road users, in accordance with Policy NP19 of the Northumberland National Park Mineral Local Plan.

**Contact Officer:**

For further information contact Ms L Butler, Development Control Manager, on 01434 611508 or e-mail: [planning@nnpa.org.uk](mailto:planning@nnpa.org.uk).

**Background Papers:**

Planning Application File: 06NP0056



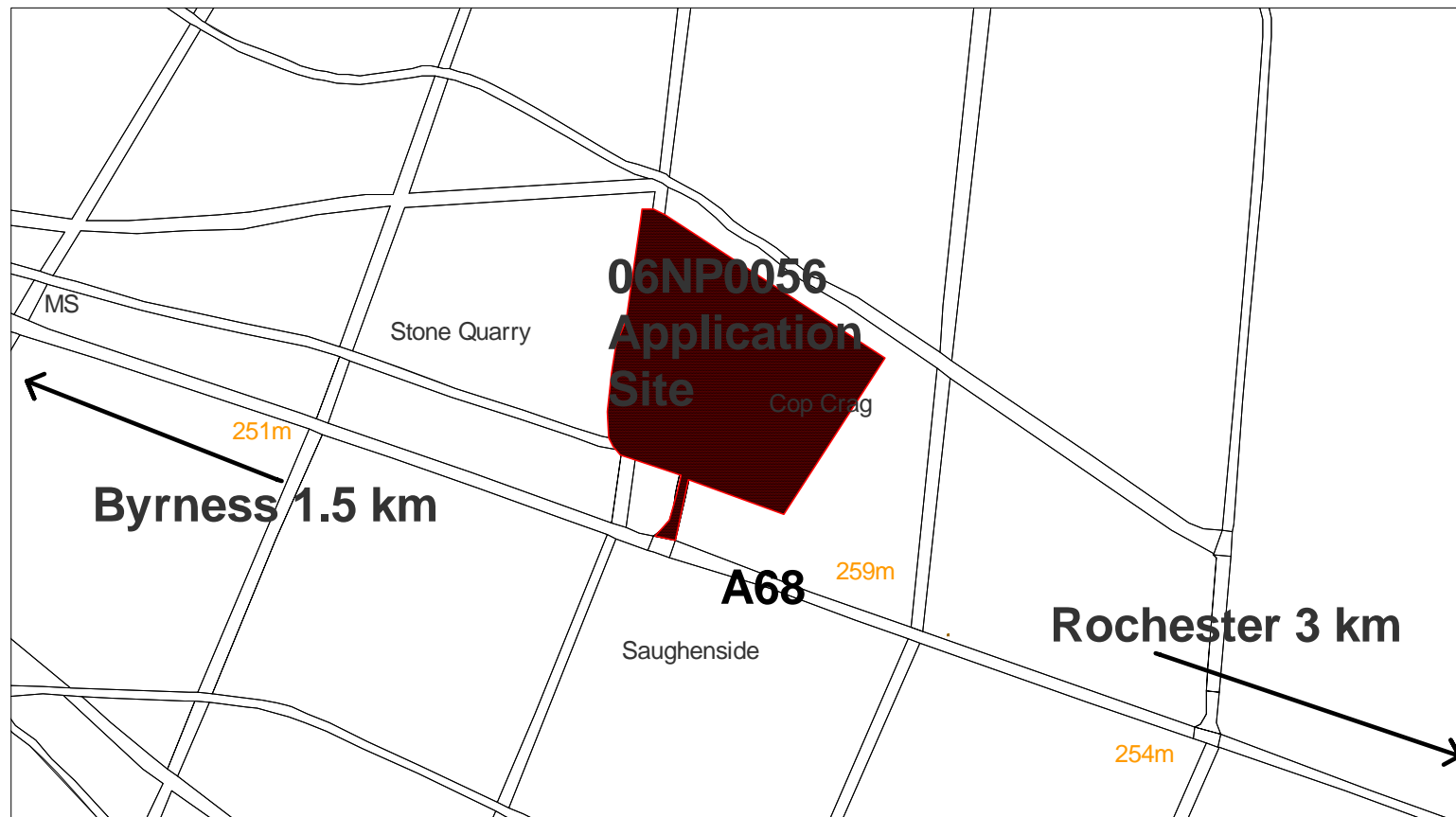
### Cop Crag Quarry Location Plan

Compiled by Northumberland National Park Authority on 20 August 2008

Northumberland National Park Authority



Scale 1:3500



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