

Transport • Economy • Environment

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Transport, Economy & Environment  
(Internal)

Date: 27<sup>th</sup> October 2016  
Ref: JC

FAO: Taufiq Islam

Dear Taufiq,

CM/51/16 | Temporary closure of public footpath IVE/15/1, followed by the laying out of a site entrance, erection of new processing and concrete plants and related infrastructure, extraction of 2 million tonnes of sand and gravel, backfilling with inert waste and progressive restoration of the land to agriculture over a period of up to nine years. | Land North Of North Park Road Richings Park Langley Buckinghamshire SL0 9DJ

Thank you for your consultation letter of 14<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Footpath IVE/15/1 passes for 253 metres along an agricultural track through an arable field from the publically maintained highway along North Park to the West Coast main line. The footpath became a dead-end when the footbridge was demolished to make way for Crossrail.

The application proposes to close the footpath temporarily for the 9-year duration of the development, with no alternative provided within the site for health and safety reasons. Once the quarry is restored the footpath will be reinstated on its original alignment. An additional footpath will be provided along the Horton Brook, from North Park to Market Lane, but I can't find information in the papers as to when this will be provided within the phased restoration.

Addressing the footpath closure, section 4.4 of the Planning Statement seeks the stopping-up of Footpath IVE/15/1 for health and safety reasons under section 248 TCPA 1990 for the duration of the mineral operations. This is accepted, but the order needs to be made under section 261 TCPA 1990: '*Temporary stopping up of highways for mineral workings*' and I have included a condition to cover this point.

The Restoration Concept Plan P1/739/5 proposes returning the land to agriculture with an increase in biodiversity and public access built into the design. A new public footpath is shown passing along the northern bank of the Horton Brook linking North Park and Market Lane, Langley. While there are existing footways along North Park and Market Lane, such a route would be a very welcome addition to the strategic rights of way network. It will be set within a traffic-free, river side environment which will more likely encourage local journeys by foot and provide recreational opportunities for the local community. It will also complement the public park and play facilities between Market Lane and Maplin Park, Langley. That said, I would argue this route should be provided at an early date.

Local people voiced the need for improved access during the community consultation. Nine years is a long time for Footpath IVE/15/1 to be closed and the experience of walking the streets of Langley and Richings Park – the alternative routes the application suggests – is a less pleasurable experience than walking along a traffic-free, rural footpath. In addition, with a 30-

metre buffer remaining between the extraction boundary and the Horton Brook (the Site Set-up/Phasing Plans illustrates the land remaining untouched during the lifetime of the quarry – see Extract 1), I would suggest a new route could be provided within at least 1 year of the development commencing without compromising site security. This will mitigate the 9-year closure of Footpath IVE15/1, but also mitigate the disruption from noise, visual intrusion, dust and increases in HGV and staff traffic generated by the site. A condition is suggested that dedicates the new footpath immediately, the order for which can be confirmed at an agreed time during the phased restoration.



**Extract 1**

The site mitigation leaves IVE/15/1 a dead-end. While one could argue this is the existing situation and restoration improvements are proposed to the south west, there is the opportunity to also dedicate a link alongside the railway line west back to Market Lane (see green line on Plan 1). This would create a pleasant circular route for walkers otherwise not provided in the local area. Moreover, there is no possible connecting footpath that could be created back into Richings Park, via an adopted highway say, via Bathurst Walk, nor any likelihood of this development funding a new footbridge over the West Coast Main Line. A condition is suggested that dedicates this additional footpath, the order for which can be confirmed upon completion of the 9-year restoration.

With the above in mind, and considering guidance in CS23 of the Buckinghamshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD, the following is recommended:

Condition 1

*Footpath IVE/15/1 should be closed for the duration of the works, requiring an Order under section 261 Town & Country Planning Act 1990. An application should be made immediately following the granting of planning permission.*

Reason:

*To close Footpath IVE/15/1 in the interests of public safety and to allow the development to take place without contravening section 137 Highways Act 1980.*

Condition 2

*Upon granting of planning permission the applicant will dedicate a public footpath under section 25 Highways Act 1980 between North Park and Market Lane, providing a width of at least 3 metres, following the alignment agreed in advance with Buckinghamshire County Council and Slough Borough Council.*

Reason:

*To enable public access to continue in the area for the duration of the works and restoration; to provide additional walking connections, in perpetuity, between Richings Park and Slough; and mitigate disruption from noise, visual intrusion, dust and additional traffic during the duration of the site operations.*

Condition 3

*Upon completion of the 9-year restoration the applicant will dedicate a public footpath under section 25 Highways Act 1980 between the northern extent of Footpath IVE/15/1 and Market Lane, providing a width of at least 3 metres, following an alignment agreed in advance with Buckinghamshire County Council and Slough Borough Council.*

Reason:

*To provide additional walking connections, in perpetuity, between Richings Park and Slough; and mitigating disruption from noise, visual intrusion, dust and additional traffic during the duration of the site operations.*

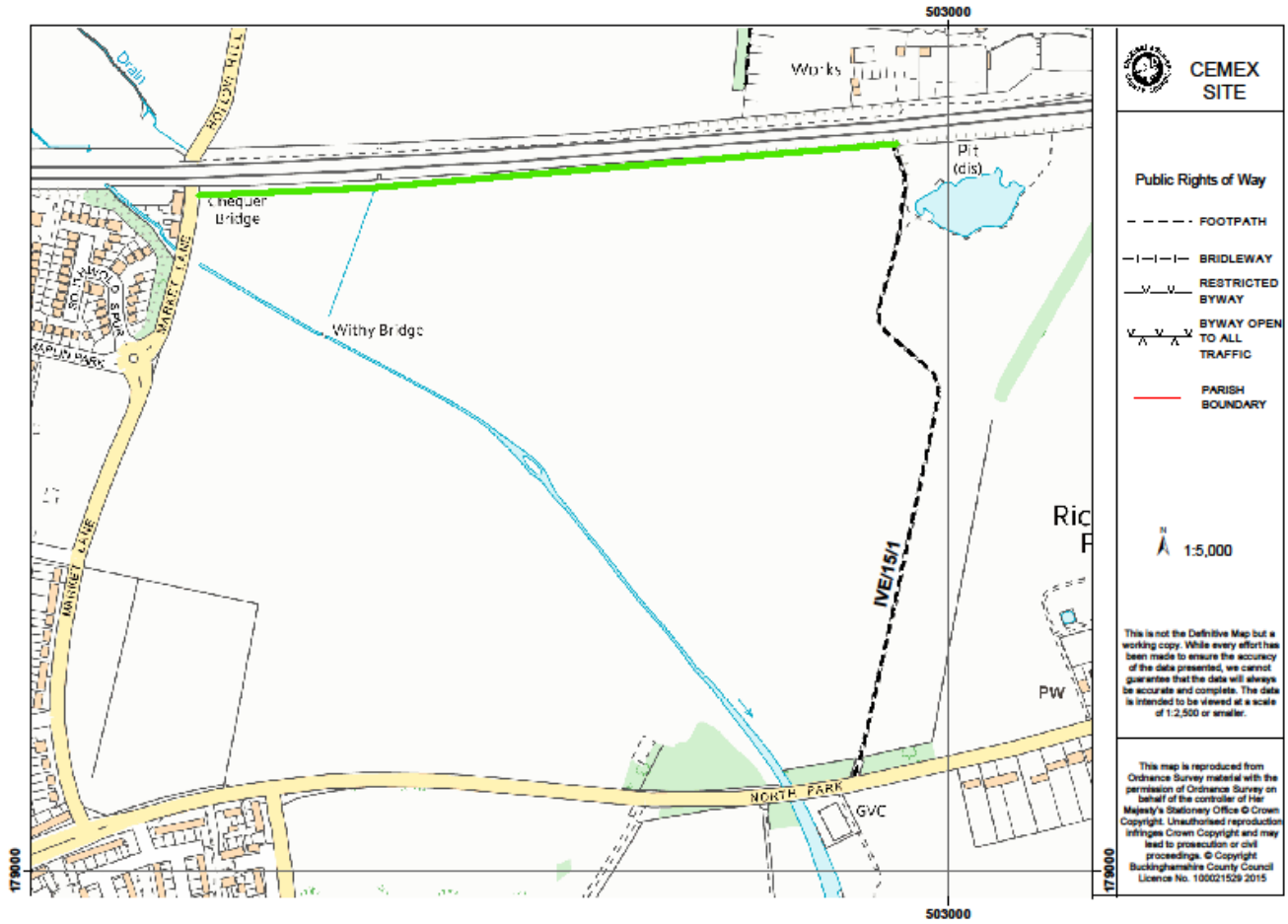
Yours sincerely,

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Plan 1