

## Context

To restore the site the Appellant is proposing to import approximately 600,000 cubic metres of inert material (equating to about 1,020,000 tonnes), importing approximately 60,000 cubic metre of inert material per annum (equating to about 102,000 tonnes per annum). Inert materials will not undergo any physical, chemical or biological transformations of significance and will not give rise to environmental pollution or risk harm to human health as a result of coming into contact with other matter.

In order to assess the availability of inert waste to enable restoration at Lea Castle Farm, we have carried out a review of the Environment Agency's (EA) Waste Data Interrogator (WDI) 2021 for data for inert waste accepted and removed from sites with environmental permits for waste management activities within Worcestershire and the surrounding West Midland Metropolitan Districts. A review of major projects and the need for the deposition of inert waste is also considered below.

## Worcestershire

In terms of Worcestershire, as set out in the WDI 2021, there are currently only 3 EA permitted landfill sites accepting inert waste. These are:

- Summerway Landfill (Wyre Forest District)
- Weights Farm Landfill (Redditch District)
- Pinches 3 Landfill (Bromsgrove District)

The total inert waste received at these sites in 2021 was 133,244 tonnes.

In terms of inert landfill capacity in Worcestershire, the EA WDI sets out that as of 2021, Worcestershire has 875,000 cubic metres of inert capacity. However, this has been steadily decreasing (apart from a spike in 2020) from 2,894,000 in 2016, 2,525,000 in 2017, 1,591,000 in 2018, 1,466,000 in 2019, 1,966,000 in 2020. Furthermore, this capacity is not totally reflective of the 3 sites permitted sites above.

In terms of Summerway, the EA WDI sets out that as of 2021 the landfill received 119,552 tonnes of inerts, however, the landfill also exported 75,201 tonnes of inerts. On review of the planning history of the site, it appears that the operations involve recycling of soils and the importation and stockpiling of hardcore and road planings for off-site distribution. Therefore, this site doesn't provide capacity for the disposal of inert waste.

In terms of Weights Farm, this site operates as a Material Reclamation Facility and received 6,012 tonnes of inerts in 2021 and therefore only has a minimal contribution to the landfill capacity in Worcestershire.

In terms of Pinches 3 Landfill, the most recent planning permission was granted on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009 (Planning Application Ref: 08/000055/CM). Condition no. 2 sets out that working and restoration had to be completed within 10 years of the date of the permission i.e. 30<sup>th</sup> November 2019. It is acknowledged that a planning application for proposed extraction of sand and gravel (850,000 tonnes) with progressive restoration by way of importation of inert waste material (860,000 tonnes) at Pinches (4) Quarry (Planning Application Ref: 19/000056/CM) is currently under consideration. It is noted though that the Supporting Planning Statement sets out that infilling won't commence until the end of 2026.

Therefore, based on the above, it appears that Worcestershire has a declining inert capacity and the 3 currently EA permit sites have very limited capacity.

#### West Midlands Metropolitan Districts

In terms of the West Midlands Metropolitan Districts, Meriden Quarry (Area G) is the only EA permitted landfill accepting inert waste. The total inert waste received at Meriden Quarry in 2021 was 783,452 tonnes. Meriden Quarry is operated by the Appellants, therefore if required, 60,000m<sup>3</sup> per annum could be redirected from Meriden Quarry to Lea Castle Farm to enable restoration.

#### Major Projects

Furthermore, as set out in the submitted Planning Statement (**CD1.02**), the site is ideally suited to help support growth in respect of the provision of minerals and the importation of inert waste associated with Lea Castle village. Large quantities of soils and clays will arise from this large scale scheme and the potential transport to and use of this material in the Appeal restoration scheme, aligns with the ethos of achieving sustainable development.

Notwithstanding this, the site is ideally geographically located to support growth/development in north Worcestershire and the west Midlands. 20 different construction projects have been planned for the West Midlands region of the UK, costing a total of approximately £10bn and will require the deposition of significant volumes of inert waste. Notwithstanding HS2, some of the construction works include the redevelopment of land across new stations created for HS2. The prospectus also includes office, retail, and residential buildings – to be located near the new Birmingham International and Birmingham city centre train stations. There are also plans for Wolverhampton's city centre, with the canal side to be redeveloped, a new manufacturing facility will be built in Nuneaton and a manufacturing park that houses Jaguar Land Rover is to be extending.

NRS group of companies are one of the largest independent suppliers of aggregates and waste management operators within the Midlands. Following the applicant's formation in 2005, NRS group now operate across the Midlands with over 70 people employed by the business in the haulage, road sweeper, waste management and quarrying facets of the business. The applicant supplies over 1 million tonnes of aggregates per annum to customers and runs a large fleet of vehicles ranging from tippers to concrete mixers, and also runs some of the largest inert tipping facilities, quarrying and recycling aggregate production operations in the Midlands. The applicant supplies primary and recycled crushed rock, gravel and ballast aggregates to market along with primary and recycled sharp sand, building sand and fill sand from their Midlands quarries. Clay soil and building clays are also sold, sourced from NRS Aggregates Ltd quarries at Meriden and Saredon. The applicant states that the proposed Lea Castle Farm site would provide a key south-western location and source of supply to help meet existing and new demand for aggregates for the company.

#### Conclusions

There is an anticipated increase in inert waste likely to be generated from large infrastructure projects in north Worcestershire and the West Midlands over the next 10 years. For the reasons set out above, there is an inert waste capacity gap in Worcestershire, placing ever increasing need for sites, such as Lea Caste Farm, which would be appropriately engineered, deliverable and accessed sustainably, to meet this increasing need.

The applicant is confident that market demand, growth projects in the area, increased housing demand will support the need for inert void at Lea Castle Farm over an above that permitted for the life of the site. Given the above, the deliverability of the restoration scheme at Lea castle Farm with the importation of 60,000m<sup>3</sup> per annum is considered achievable.