

Restoration of the Remainder of Ince Moss Tip, Cemetery Road, Lower Ince, Wigan



NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Prepared by

LEM

Makerfield Mining Ltd

July 2022

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A planning application is to be submitted to Wigan Council by LEM Makerfield Mining Ltd. The proposal consists of the importation of inert materials, soils and clays, onto the Former Ince Moss Tip to cap off the remaining part of the Tip and restore the application site to beneficial use over a 2 year period.
- 1.2 Wigan Council deem the proposed development falls within Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011 and therefore requires the preparation of an Environmental Statement to provide the information required in Schedule 4.
- 1.3 A detailed assessment of the environmental effects of the proposal which were identified by the Council in the previous Screening and Scoping exercise under the following headings:
- i) Ecology
 - ii) Landscape and Visual Impact
 - iii) Noise
 - iv) Dust and Air Quality
 - v) Hydrology and Hydrogeology
- 1.4 This document summarises the content and findings of the Environmental Statement (ES).

2.0 Site History

- 2.1 The Ince Moss Tip site has been used for waste disposal and material reprocessing since the 1960's with the majority of the application area now covered with made ground consisting of industrial waste materials. The Tip was previously owned by Network Rail and waste materials present on the site include railway ballast, railway sleepers, boiler ash and scrap metal. There is also historic evidence of earlier disposal of colliery spoil from pits.
- 2.2 In 2006 Network Rail sold the majority of the old tip site to LEM Makerfield Mining Ltd and this land is currently the subject of an approved capping and restoration scheme. The remainder land was "retained" by Network Rail and is uncapped.
- 2.3 The Tip site lies within the Wigan Flashes complex and is therefore surrounded by water bodies of high ecological importance which include the Bryn Marsh & Ince Moss SSSI to the east and Turners Flash SBI to the immediate north. Site investigations have identified various contaminants present at elevated concentrations including hydrocarbons and heavy metals. The investigation report concluded that the site should be capped and restored to minimise water ingress into the waste and therefore reduce the potential for leaching of contaminants into groundwater and the adjacent lakes.
- 2.4 The Network Rail land has an abandoned appearance and has been extensively fly-tipped in the past. The LEM land is currently undergoing capping and restoration. The Ince Moss Tip area was previously subject to abuse by unauthorised motorcyclists and others who created an extensive network of deeply rutted tracks throughout the site together with large areas of bare earth with little or no vegetation.

3 Description of Proposed Development

- 3.1 The planning application proposal consists of the importation of suitable inert material, soils and clays to cap and restore the remaining part of the Ince Moss Tip and to achieve a comprehensive restoration to beneficial use over a 2 year period.
- 3.2 The proposed scheme would enable the application site to be finally restored to wildflower grassland with coarse grassland buffer strips linking the site to the adjacent Turners Flash. The restoration would also significantly enhance the ecological value of the area.
- 3.3 The volume of material is considered to represent the minimum volume needed to deliver the proposed restoration scheme.
- 3.4 The total planning area of the proposal is approximately 8.5 hectares.
- 3.5 The site would provide continued full time employment for 5 persons and help support other local jobs such as service providers, fuel supplies, plant spares and lorry drivers.
- 3.6 The proposed working site hours remain the same at:
Mondays to Fridays 0700 to 1800 with lorries restricted to 0800 to 1700
No operations would take place on Saturdays, Sundays or Bank Holidays
- 3.7 The site would continue to be operated by a local company LEM Makerfield Mining Ltd who employ local people.

4 Environmental Effects

4.0 Ecology

- 4.1 Various surveys and studies have been undertaken at Ince Moss Tip since 2006 including Phase 1 Habitat Surveys, Bat Dusk foraging and Bat Roost Search, Water Vole Surveys, Breeding Bird Surveys, Badger Surveys and Evaluation of Great Crested Newt issues.
- 4.2 To support the development of the restoration plan, an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed site has been undertaken in October 2021. The PEA has been supported by a breeding bird survey undertaken in June 2022. To further support the proposals, an impact assessment has been undertaken.
- 4.3 The full Ecological Survey report of 2022 includes the site survey, the desk top study and the breeding bird survey. The Report includes an impact assessment and outlines a series of recommendations to inform how the ecological resource of the site can be managed during the development and includes precautionary measures to ensure that direct impacts on key species are avoided.
- 4.4 A separate Restoration Strategy Plan accompanies the planning application which details the habitat creation/restoration measures for the site.

5.0 Traffic and Access

- 5.1 The site is accessed from the A573 Warrington Road via Cemetery Road adjacent to the Wigan Borough Cemetery to an un-adopted metalled road which comprises the purpose built existing access into the site.
- 5.2 Bearing in mind the access route, the HGV movements have been kept as low as is reasonably possible. It is proposed to deliver approximately 20 lorry loads per day (40 total vehicle movements per day), which equates to approximately 3 inward per hour (i.e. 6 vehicle movements per hour).
- 5.3 Lorry movements would continue to be restricted to 0800 to 1700 hours on Mondays to Fridays. There would be no lorry movements on Saturdays, Sundays or Public Holidays.
- 5.4 A restrictive condition was imposed in the current planning consent in relation to the existing LEM site to limit these movements. The same condition is expected again.

6.0 Landscape and Visual Impact

- 6.1 The retained land, in its existing form has an abandoned appearance and has been extensively fly-tipped in the past. It has also been subject to abuse by unauthorised motorcyclists and others who have created an extensive network of tracks throughout the site together with areas of bare earth with little or no vegetation. The remaining part of the site comprises the operational LEM capping and restoration scheme, therefore the visual impact of a working site already exists at this location.
- 6.2 The landscape character would only be slightly affected in the short term but there will be long term benefits once the scheme is completed.
- 6.3 The site is barely visible from any of the surrounding landscape due to significant tree cover and topography surrounding the site which means the restoration works can take place without visual intrusion on any of the closest receptors.
- 6.4 There are no properties with direct views into the site. There are also no views from public footpaths unless in very close proximity.
- 6.5 The proposed restoration scheme includes wildflower grassland with coarse grassland buffer strips to provide habitats for birds and foraging for bats which would significantly enhance the ecological value of the site.
- 6.6 The restoration proposals would bring long term positive benefits to the area as a whole, providing an area of increased opportunity for biodiversity. It is therefore anticipated that the development proposals, being of temporary duration would have a minimal impact upon the existing landscape.

7.0 Noise

- 7.1 A noise impact assessment of the proposed development was undertaken using specialised noise modelling software which calculated the anticipated noise levels associated with the development.
- 7.2 Noise prediction calculations confirm that the proposed scheme is unlikely to cause any significant noise impact at nearby noise sensitive properties.
- 7.3 Considering other factors such as the limited operational hours, the temporary nature of the development, and the fact that predicted noise from the development would be significantly lower than existing ambient noise levels, it was concluded that noise complaints would be unlikely.
- 7.4 Based on the findings of the assessment and the fact that no noise complaints have been received to date it was concluded that the proposed development would not have an adverse noise impact on nearby noise sensitive properties or the surrounding area.

8.0 Dust and Air Quality

- 8.1 The site is remote from residential properties, the closest being approximately 400 metres to the west on Darley Road, separated by significant tree cover therefore the possibility of dust nuisance occurrence from the restoration of the site is very low.
- 8.2 There is a risk of dust generation from some aspects of road transport, notably from the re-suspension of dust arising from track-out by inadequately cleaned vehicles, inadequately maintained hard surfaces and excessive vehicle speeds. Consequently, the site operator would continue to ensure that dust emissions from this stage of the operation are kept under control by ensuring that appropriate control measures and procedures are in place.
- 8.3 There is a very long access road before vehicles would enter the main highway network from Cemetery Road and onto the A573 Warrington Road. All open wagons and trailers must be kept sheeted unless necessary for loading, *etc.*
- 8.4 The existing wheel wash would continue to be used by all haulage vehicles visiting the site. The wheel wash would be properly maintained and supplementary cleaning equipment (such as a spray lance) would be available as required.
- 8.5 A powered road sweeper would be available at all times during site operating hours and the site access road would be maintained to a high standard of cleanliness by regular mechanical sweeping and wetting down as required.
- 8.6 A speed limit of 15 mph on unmade roads will be strictly enforced. Unmade access roads would be kept in good repair and will be wetted as required with the water bowser.
- 8.7 There is a 20mph speed limit on Cemetery Road and drivers would be made aware of this statutory limit. Any breach of the limits would be dealt with by banning the haulier from site.

9.0 Water Resources

- 9.1 In its current form the site is perceived to represent a long term risk to surface water and groundwater resources.
- 9.2 A detailed assessment of the potential impact of capping Ince Moss Landfill on groundwater quality and associated risk of contaminant migration to adjacent water bodies has been undertaken.
- 9.3 The assessment has demonstrated that Ince Moss Landfill is isolated from surrounding hydrogeological systems with well-defined boundaries formed by existing infrastructure, including the main line railway and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal.
- 9.4 It has been concluded that there are no other significant inflows to the site groundwater system. All groundwater draining through the site discharges to Turner's Flash at the north eastern site boundary.
- 9.5 Ongoing site investigation and testing programmes have demonstrated that the waste deposits contain substances with the potential to contaminate groundwater. Laboratory analysis has indicated that heavy metals, hydrocarbons and other organic compounds are potentially mobile in recharge waters.
- 9.6 Contaminant transport modelling for the landfill in its capped and uncapped configuration has indicated that capping would lead to a significant i.e. 10 times, reduction in the concentration of contaminants to Turner's Flash.
- 9.7 The model predicts that if the site remains uncapped discharges contaminants to Turner's Flash would significantly exceed relevant Environmental Quality Standards (EQS) for many years. The capping and restoration of the LEM site has already greatly reduced the potential for contamination. The capping and restoration of the remaining part of the tip would minimise the potential for contamination of Turner's Flash and downstream areas.
- 9.8 If the application remainder site is also capped the concentration of all modelled contaminants would be significantly below the relevant EQS.

10.0 Planning Policy

National Planning Policy for Waste

The Waste Management Plan for England sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. Positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering this country's waste ambitions through:

- delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy
- helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment;

The Waste Hierarchy

- the most effective environmental solution is often to reduce the generation of waste, including the re-use of products – prevention
- products that have become waste can be checked, cleaned or repaired so that they can be re-used – preparing for re-use
- waste materials can be reprocessed into products, materials, or substances –recycling
- waste can serve a useful purpose by replacing other materials that would otherwise have been used – other recovery
- the least desirable solution where none of the above options is appropriate –Disposal



- 10.1 Although the proposed development does not necessarily complement Government aims and objects as it is near the bottom of the waste hierarchy it does provide an engineering solution to enable a contaminated site to be capped off and restored using waste that would otherwise go to landfill.

The Wigan Local Plan Core Strategy – September 2013

Policy SD 1 - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

In considering development proposals we will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. We will work proactively with applicants to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Core Strategy and subsequent plans will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 10.2 This is a sustainable development for the restoration of a contaminated former landfill site with long term benefits including biodiversity enhancement to wildflower grassland and habitat linkage to the adjacent designated sites.

11.0 Conclusions

- 11.1 This is a sustainable development for the restoration of a contaminated former landfill site with long term benefits including biodiversity enhancement with restoration to wildflower grassland and habitat linkage to the adjacent designated sites.
- 11.2 The ecological study has demonstrated that the site does not support any significantly large important habitats or species of intrinsic botanical interest.
- 11.3 Should the site not be fully capped and restored to the proposed contours, the land would pose a risk of pollution to groundwater and surface water. Additionally, the land would continue to be associated with illegal trespass, off-road scrambler motor biking, fly tipping and antisocial activity including the burning of stolen vehicles.
- 11.4 Therefore we consider that the long term benefits that this proposal would bring significantly outweigh the short term impact of the proposal at 2 years duration.

Further copies of this Non-Technical Summary can be obtained free of charge, on request to:

LEM Makerfield Mining Ltd.
2 Heap Bridge,
Bury
BL9 7HR