

Attention News Editor: 2nd July 2005
For immediate release

Exhibition to Publicise Plans for Proposed Sand and Gravel Extraction on Land off Fen Lane, near Ditchingham, Norfolk

Lafarge Aggregates, the operators of the award winning sand and gravelquarry at Whitlingham, Norwich, are developing a planning application to submit to Norfolk County Council for mineral extraction near Ditchingham. The proposed site is located south of the Norwich Rd (B1332), off Fen Lane between Ditchingham and Hedenham.

The company proposes to excavate approximately one million tonnes of high quality sand and gravel over an 8 - 11 year period. This would give an annual production rate of 90 - 125,000 tonnes a year. When phased in with other company operations, this would allow the company to maintain continuity of supply into the local markets and maintain employment.

Lafarge has an extensive, high quality restoration record and works closely with the relevant local authorities and other statutory bodies including English Nature, DEFRA, the Environment Agency and the Countryside Agency in managing its operations. For example, at Whitlingham Quarry, close to Norwich city centre, the company has won a national restoration commendation and several environmental awards.

Stuart Anderson, Senior Planning and Estates Manager for Lafarge says, "that it always takes a long time to bring on a new resource and that it is vital to start the process early.

"It can take several years to develop a new facility to provide the continuity of supply suggested by the government and it would be irresponsible of us to leave it to the last minute.

"One of the additional advantages of this approach is that it allows the company to carry out pre-planting of trees to screen the operation from any neighbouring houses.

"Early extraction and engineering in the south east of the site will allow us to excavate a site to accommodate a low level processing plant, which will be positioned significantly below ground level and be visually screened. A low profile readymix concrete plant using processed mineral from the site will be developed alongside the processing plant."

The site will be operated in ten phases with restoration progressing sequentially. The restoration plan has been developed to assist in meeting national and regional biodiversity targets and will include a mosaic of different habitats, providing plentiful encouragement for new species to colonise the site.

Lafarge is holding an exhibition to publicise its proposals at the Kings Head Hotel, Market Place, Bungay on Monday 18th July 2005 from 2.30pm - 8.00pm.

Members of the Lafarge planning and operations teams as well as some of the independent technical consultants will be available to answer questions throughout the exhibition.

Stuart Anderson adds, "We always try to involve the local communities around our facilities so that they are fully aware of our activities and proposals. We look forward to welcoming local residents and other interested parties to our exhibition."

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