

Planning Application for Spicer House Lane Quarry.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal

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2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 CF Landscape Design were appointed to carry out a Landscape and Visual Appraisal of a proposed quarry site on Spicer House Lane, near Thurlstone. An appraisal of the existing landscape character has been made followed by an assessment of the impact that the proposed quarry will have on the landscape character and visual amenity.
- 2.2 In carrying out the appraisal, the principles outlined within the guidelines listed below have been generally followed, the methodology being adapted to suit the individual circumstances.
- 2.2.1 Landscape Character Assessment - Guidance for England & Scotland, published by the Countryside Agency. (2002)
- 2.2.2 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, (2nd edition 2002) published by The Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.
- 2.2.3 The criteria used for assessing landscape quality and sensitivity; and impact significance can be found in Appendix D.
- 2.3 The report should be read with reference to the plans in the appendices and FGB drawings

3 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

3.1 National context

3.1.1 In 1998 The Countryside Commission (now Agency) published a national Countryside Character Map identifying a series of Landscape Character Areas for the whole of England and Wales. The site on Spicer House Lane lies within the Landscape Character Area 37, Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe. This area consists of the eastern slopes of the Pennines; broad upland plateau areas dissected by numerous steep sided valleys; extensive urban development mainly confined within the valleys and areas; woodland on the steep sided slopes and around settlements giving the impression of a well wooded landscape; upland pastoral farming with strong linear patterns of walled enclosure on plateaux.

3.1.2 Although some of the key characteristics of the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe are present, the study area represents the quieter, rural, broad upland plateau landscape aspects of the landscape character. Within the vicinity of the site the upland plateau dissected by linear patterns of stone walls to provide pastoral farming is a very strong influence on landscape character, but the more urban aspects are absent and the topography is gentler with few steep, wooded valleys dissecting the area.

3.2 Local context

3.2.1 The site lies within Barnsley Borough Council administrative area. In the Local Development Framework – Preferred Options Oct 2005, the site is located within Green Belt. No other specific designations indicating a particular landscape, ecological or historic value pertain to this site or its immediate surroundings.

3.2.2 From Barnsley Borough Council's Landscape Character Assessment of 2002 the site falls within a landscape character zone identified as 'F1: Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland.' The key characteristics identified for this area, described below, are strongly representative of the study area.

- **Stepped landform** rising to 367m at Whitley Edge
- **Fields of pasture** comprising medium geometric field units strongly defined by distinctive stone walls.
- **Beech plantations** stand out on the skyline, sometimes enclosed by stone walls
- **Unimproved pasture with scrub** on steeper slopes
- **Scattered farmsteads** of sandstone, quarried from the local area.

- **Villages of Thurlstone and Millhouse Green** on the character area border with the valley of the River Don, both with links to the former fulling mills along the river.
- **Windfarm** at Spicer Hill is visually prominent on the skyline.
- **Single lane rural roads** criss-cross the open countryside, bounded by stone walls.
- **Disused industrial quarries, shafts and mines** indicate the importance of the area for the extraction of coal and stone.
- **Man made reservoirs** at Broadstone, Ingbirchworth, Royd Moor and Scout Dike.
- **Panoramic views** over adjacent river valleys and towards the open moorland of the Peak District National Park.

3.2.3 The proposed site lies just below the summit of Spicer Hill, on its north-eastern flanks. Spicer Hill is a locally high point on a ridge line dividing the Scout Dike Valley from the steep sided valley of the River Don to the south. Spicer House Lane runs along the north-eastern side of this ridge and Whitley Road runs along the south western side, above Whitley Edge. The valley of Scout Beck Dike and the plateau areas above are the stronger influence on the landscape character of the study area with the Spicer Hill/Whitley Edge ridge representing a boundary and change to the steeper sided, more urban valley of the River Don to the south. Scout Beck Dike flows along a broad irregular based valley containing Ingbirchworth, Royd Moor and Scout Dike reservoirs with regular, steep slopes rising from them on either side. The A629 runs along the lower northern flank of the valley and this with the village of Ingbirchworth form the main urban influences. The remaining landscape is one of regular fields divided by stone walls across both the valley sides and plateau areas above, punctuated by sandstone farmsteads and infrequent, small, regularly shaped woodlands.

3.2.4 Long views from the upper parts of the valley sides and ridges between valleys form an important element of the landscape character. Spicer Hill wind turbines, situated just to the south of the Spicer Hill ridge line, are dominant features in most views in this area. This conglomeration of tall wind turbines are a foreign element in an otherwise smooth, open, rural landscape but have become a well known local feature, forming a strong focal point in many of the longer views.

3.3 Site Landscape Character.

3.3.1 The proposed site is one of the rectangular fields lying just below the Spicer Hill summit on its northern side, overlooking Scout Dike valley. The field is a typical improved pasture one, bounded by stone walls. The walls are in a poor condition made stock proof by post and wire repairs in places.

Immediately south of the site lies the disused Annat Royd Quarry now naturally regenerated with grass, heather, and scrub developing into woodland.

3.3.2 Spicer Hill windfarm forms a backdrop to the site. This is a major feature in the landscape described in Barnsley Council's Landscape Character Assessment as follows.

"Its graceful turbines are visible from many miles around, including from some elevated areas in the far extremes of Barnsley Borough 23 kilometers to the east, providing a prominent landmark in this large scale landscape."

4 THE PROPOSALS

4.1 Works

- 4.1.1 Full details of the proposals are found in the Spicer House Report, Section 3, Working Method, and on drawing numbers JGP/SH/WS-02, JGP/SH/WS-03, JGP/SH/WS-04 and JGP/SH/WS-05. A summary is given here for ease of reading, as an understanding of the magnitude of the proposals is necessary in order to assess their subsequent impact on landscape character and visual amenity.
- 4.1.2 The quarry will be excavated in 4 phases over 10 years working from Spicer House Lane south westwards across the site. For each phase topsoil and subsoil will be stripped separately and stored in bunds approximately 3m high around the quarry. The bunds will be created along the Spicer House Lane boundary in phase one and progress down both the north-west and south-eastern sides in phases 2 and 3 with bunding along the south-western boundary being created in phase 4.
- 4.1.3 A void of between 10 and 15m depth will be created as the extraction progresses across the site. The haul route will be along the north western void boundary. It is intended to progressively restore the site using quarry wastes from each phase to start creating the restoration profile on previous phases.
- 4.1.4 The proposed workings will result in an average of 15 vehicles per day leaving the quarry. Most of these will be small flatbeds, transits or 3-tonners. Access and egress for HGV vehicles will be direct onto Spicer House Lane where a new access will be constructed to agreed Highways Standards. On completion this access will be reduced to field gate width.

4.2 Restoration

4.2.1 A low level restoration scheme is proposed. The main objectives are as follows:

- To encourage natural regeneration of the quarry, forming a delph landform and vegetation similar to the landform and vegetation of Annat Royd Quarry to the north-east.
- Establishment of acid grassland and scrub to reflect the local upland moorland habitat,
- To encourage the limited growth of trees and shrubs within the quarry.
- To increase the numbers of small woodland plantations in the landscape.
- To maintain and restore stone wall boundaries.

4.2.2 The quarry will be worked in a series of benches corresponding with bedding planes. These benches will be left intact around the perimeter of the workings and waste material will be tipped at the base of vertical faces to mimic scree slopes. The quarry floor will be graded roughly to provide a range of microhabitats. It is anticipated that a series of very small scale damp and dry areas will be created across the quarry floor.

4.2.3 The benches on the faces, the quarry floor and the base of the scree slopes will be spread with subsoil to provide a substrate suitable for the growth of grasses and wildflowers. Where the topography permits, this substrate will be cultivated and sown with a wildflower: grass seed mix. Hand sowing will be undertaken on the elevated benches.

Groups of trees and shrubs (transplants) will be planted on some benches and at the foot of the quarry sides or scree slopes to kick-start the establishment of trees and scrub. Subsoil will be placed on these areas to a greater depth than elsewhere and the trees pit planted into topsoil filled pits.

4.2.4 Details of the seed mix have not yet been determined but it is intended to use a mix of local provenance. Similarly, tree and shrubs species will be chosen to reflect those in the immediate locality.

4.2.5 The restoration works will be undertaken on a continuous basis. As one area is worked out, final grading, spreading of wastes and seeding will be undertaken whilst active works continue on the next phase.

4.3 *Magnitude of proposals*

- 4.3.1 Small scale quarrying is an activity that has been undertaken for many years in this area, active and disused quarries form an integral part of the landscape. The disused Annat Royd quarry lies directly across Spicer House Lane and a much larger quarry is located 0.5km to the west of the site just over the ridgeline. Thus this type of activity is not foreign to this landscape.
- 4.3.2 The proposed works will be within the confines of a single field, thus they represent relatively small scale works.
- 4.3.3 The steady removal of stone products from the quarry over several years will result in additional noise and movement in the area.
- 4.3.4 Overall the proposals are assessed as having a magnitude of medium proportions.

5 LANDSCAPE QUALITY AND SENSITIVITY.

- 5.1 Landscape Quality indicates the value which may be placed on the landscape, based on character, condition and aesthetic appeal. It takes into account judgements on the physical state of the landscape and its intactness, from visual, functional and ecological perspectives.
- 5.2 Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the landscape's ability to accommodate change. In many cases the higher the quality of a landscape the higher its sensitivity. However this depends on the nature and magnitude of the change, also on the individual nature of the landscape character under study. In addition a landscape that is highly visible from a number of points is likely to be more sensitive to change.
- 5.3 Criteria for assessing landscape quality and sensitivity are described in Appendix D.
- 5.4 The BMBC Landscape Character appraisal describes the Ingbirchworth Upland Farmland as having a "strong" character resulting from *"its distinctive stepped topography, intact network of stone walls, rural upland character and panoramic views."* However, its condition is described as "moderate" due to the decline of individual features such as stone boundary walls and small woodlands. This appraisal is strongly appropriate to the study area. The study area varies in the presence of the windfarm that has a strong influence on landscape character but has not resulted in a change in quality. In addition the increasing traffic on the A629 and new development in and around Ingbirchworth have had a minor detrimental influence on quality of the study area by strengthening the closest urban influences.
- 5.5 The large scale exposed nature of the landscape, the low density settlement and the distinctive field pattern render this landscape inherently sensitive to change of a large scale and/or urban nature. The landscape will be particularly sensitive to changes of a nature that are not already represented in the area. For example, conversion of farm buildings to residential property, woodland planting or small scale countryside recreation development could be accommodated well but new residential, commercial buildings or large scale agricultural buildings will have a strong detrimental influence on the landscape character.

Small scale quarrying has been part of this landscape for many years and further quarrying of this nature is unlikely, in principle, to be detrimental to the landscape character, although, of course, the exact location, scale of works and mitigating screening for an individual quarry would determine the ease with which it could be accommodated into the landscape.

- 5.6 The landscape quality is assessed as **good**
- 5.7 The sensitivity of the landscape is assessed as **medium**.

6 VISIBILITY

6.1 General

- 6.1.1 The long views from the ridges and upland plateaux are an essential part of the landscape character of this area. As the site is in an elevated position lying just below Spicer Hill it is potentially visible from a wide area.
- 6.1.2 There are several clear views of the site from the north-eastern valley side, (along the A629, Ingbirchworth and the south western edge of Upper Denby.) However in all these views the tall turbines of the windfarm form a very prominent feature of some interest, that minimise the relative visual importance of the proposed quarry in these views. The disused Annat Royd quarry lies immediately below the proposed quarry in these long views. The proposed restoration will render the proposed quarry indistinguishable, becoming visually an extension of Annat Royd quarry.
- 6.1.3 Closer viewpoints from the north-east facing valley slopes are frequently interrupted by localised topography and stone walls. However these glimpsed views are again strongly influenced by the tall wind turbines that appear, sometimes surreally, over the local variations in topography.
- 6.1.4 The site is visible in views along the ridge line, particularly from Spicer House Lane to the north-west. From the south east part of Spicer House Lane the view is screened by small woodlands and by the topography.
- 6.1.5 To the south west the land rises slightly then falls over towards Whitley Edge preventing any views from this direction.

6.2 Individual viewpoints. The following viewpoints have been assessed individually.

- 6.2.1 *From B6115. View 1. (This view is also representative of footpaths running across the hillside west towards the A629 and east to Fall Edge Farm. The easterly footpath soon drops downhill cutting off views across the valley.) A wide view of the opposite valley side can be seen from this view point. The site can be seen as a small part of a wide, distant view. The wind turbines are a prominent feature on the skyline with the proposed quarry site one of the distinctive rectangular fields just under the skyline.*

After restoration the quarry will be indistinguishable as a separate feature in the landscape, representing an extension of the minor irregularity in texture of the disused Annat Royd quarry. The proposed tree planting along its Spicer House Lane boundary will tie into and strengthen the pattern of occasional small woodlands within the view. During the operation of the quarry, the mounding along the Spicer Lane boundary will be effective in screening the works from this viewpoint and the distance of the viewpoint will mean that the artificial form of the mounds will not be discernable. The only detrimental impact on the view will be that of vehicles entering and leaving the site and the small increase in traffic along Spicer House Lane. Thus the impact of the proposals on this view during quarrying will be *slight adverse*; the impact after restoration is assessed at *slight, neutral*.

6.2.2 *From the A629 at its junction with Carr Lane. View Two.* Similar long views across the valley are obtained from this point but as it is lower than view one the foreground plays a stronger role in the view. The site forms a small section of the skyline but again the most dominant features on the skyline are the tall wind turbines. The foreground is of the typical large fields but the neglected nature of the stone wall boundaries and clutter around individual farms is evident when viewed at close quarters. After restoration the proposed quarry will represent only a small change to the distant part of this view and will be similar in texture to the adjacent Annat Royd Quarry, with the addition of a small woodland. During the working phase of the quarrying the mounds erected along the site frontage and those along the south-eastern boundary will screen all views of the works effectively. The mounds are too distant to be obtrusive features in this view. The movement of soil stripping vehicles will be seen in the distance during the start of each of the four phases, as will the movement of vehicles in and out of the site and increased traffic along Spicer House Lane. These latter elements will be a minor detrimental impact on the view.

6.2.3 *From the junction of the A629 and Lakeside View. View 3.* Lakeside View is a small, new development of housing overlooking Scout Dike Reservoir. The access road runs downhill towards the housing and this, along with the presence of mature trees, means that the quarry site is likely to be less visible from the housing itself than from the photographic viewpoint. However a full assessment would need to be made, assessing views from upper windows, to be certain. The proposed site forms a very small part of a distant view from this point, partly along the skyline. The oblique nature of the viewpoint means that it is less visible in the landscape than a direct, facing view, although the fact that it forms part of the skyline means that its visibility increases.

However the foreground interest of woodland and Scout Dike reservoir renders the distant part of the view less important. During the working phases of the quarrying the mounding erected along the south-eastern boundary will effectively screen the workings. The initial works involved in phase 1, before the south-eastern mound is constructed, may be distantly visible, before the extraction level drops below surrounding ground levels and following this, the soil stripping works of the further phases. Again the vehicle movements in and out of the quarry and along Spicer House Lane will be seen in the distance which will be detrimental to the view. After restoration these latter elements will cease and the restored landform and vegetation will form a continuation of Annat Royd quarry and a strengthening of small woodland cover in the view.

6.2.4 *From Scout Dike car park. View 4.* This car park is well used by walkers, cyclists and fishermen. It is similar to View 3, above, but at a slightly lower elevation the south-eastern boundary wall of the site forms a small section of the distant skyline with the site itself only partly visible. Dropping down to the shores of the reservoir the site is not visible. From Scout Dike car park quarry construction vehicles may be seen for a short time as soils are stripped and the south-eastern boundary mounding is constructed but these will form a very minor disruption to the view, as will the small increase in vehicle movements along Spicer House Lane. After restoration the site will be only partly visible with the tree growth becoming visible on the horizon as the vegetation matures.

6.2.5 *From Folly Lane -View 5.* Folly Lane is well used by horses and walkers and leads to footpaths forming part of the Penistone Boundary Walk and to the southern shore of Royd Moor reservoir. This is an open view that typifies all the positive aspects of the upland farmland landscape character. It forms a direct middle to distant view of the proposals site. The proposed quarry will cover one field in the extensive pattern of rectangular fields, with the wind turbines forming a strong feature on the skyline behind. Phase one of the quarrying works and to some extent phase 2 will be screened by the mounding along the Spicer House Lane boundary, however as the quarrying progresses back uphill, the tops of the faces facing in easterly directions may be visible. The boundary mounding will be slightly intrusive in the broad smooth landform but the covering of grass will help significantly to disguise this. The impact of increased traffic movements will have a greater impact on this view than the previously described more distant views. After restoration the site will be very similar in colour and texture to Annat Royd quarry sitting comfortably within the existing strong field pattern.

Although this will represent a change to the strongly pastoral landscape it will not be a negative one. The rectangular shaped woodland to the frontage will strengthen the pattern of small scale woodland cover in the landscape.

6.2.6 *From Spicer House Lane looking south-west. View 6.* The flat profile of Spicer Hill dipping to the north-east, with the wind turbines behind, forms the main element of this view, with the broad scale pastoral landscape extending and dipping beyond, to the north-east. The proposals site is located on the north-eastern side of the summit, its far boundary forming a section of the skyline in this middle distance view. A strip of woodland running along a beck beyond Spicer House breaks up the uniformity of the pastoral field pattern. Initial soil stripping and mound construction will be visible from this viewpoint. The mounding along the north-western boundary will effectively screen the phase 1 works but the progress of the excavation across the site will outstrip the construction of the mounding along the north-western boundary during the course of phase 2. The completion of the mound at the start of phase 3 will screen most of the works effectively although due to the sites elevated position above the viewpoint the tops of the north west facing faces are likely to be visible. After restoration some of the rock faces will remain visible with an irregular landform and vegetation below. Whilst this will represent a change to the view it is not deemed a negative one.

6.2.7 *From Castle Hill on Windmill Lane. View 7.* A similar, but more distant and open view to the above, looking across the top of the Whitley Edge escarpment. From this viewpoint the proposals site is no longer on the skyline as the more distant hills of the escarpment are visible beyond. This, along with the dominant wind turbines, renders the proposals site of little importance in the view. During the quarrying the boundary soil bunds will effectively screen the works and the only change to the view will be of the vehicles entering and leaving the site and some additional traffic along Spicer House Lane. The restored site will provide a small change of texture within this wide view but its position and distance from the viewer will render it of minor impact only.

7 IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISUAL AMENITY

7.1 General

7.1.1 In broad terms the character of this upland farming landscape will not be significantly affected by the proposals. The scale of the quarrying works is insignificant when compared with the broad scale of the wider landscape. Small quarries, along with farm buildings and small woodlands are interruptions to the uniformity of the rectangular stone walled fields that add to the intrinsic landscape character. The elevated position of the quarry means that it is widely visible in long views, sometimes forming part of the skyline that increases its impact, but generally it forms only a very small element of wider vistas. The wind turbines on Spicer Hill above the proposed site are features of strong visual significance that dwarf the impact that the proposed quarry would have on the landscape character.

7.2 Impact after restoration.

7.3 After restoration the site will change from a smooth green rectangular field to a textured heathland, scrub and trees amongst an irregular landform of rock faces scree slopes and small mounds. It will be similar in form and texture to the disused Annat Royd, almost adjacent. A small rectangular woodland will be created along the road frontage.

7.4 These all represent a change to a small section of the wider landscape and will represent an interruption to the smooth flowing pastoral land. However the overall field pattern will remain and no elements that are foreign, and therefore negative, to the landscape will be introduced. The elevated position of the quarry means that it is widely visible in distant views, which increases its impact on landscape character as distant vistas form an important element of this landscape. However, the scale of the site and the proposed changes are minor in relation to the large scale open character.

- 7.5 Individual elements of the restoration scheme will add value to the present landscape. The restoration of stone walls will assist in improving the condition of the landscape and the proposed stand of trees along Spicer House Lane will help to increase woodland cover, a small but significant feature of the landscape character that has been declining in recent years.
- 7.6 The proposed restoration will significantly increase biodiversity with its value being further increased by its proximity to Annat Royd quarry, an area of similar habitat.
- 7.7 The retention of the basic quarry landform will create a long term footprint of the quarry on the landscape, representing a past land use that has been an integral part of the formation of the landscape character.
- 7.7.1 The impact of the works after restoration is assessed as *neutral*.
- 7.8 **Impact during the works.**
- 7.8.1 Throughout the course of the works the impact on the broad landscape character will be slight, due to small scale of the works relative to the large scale of the landscape. In addition the bulk of the works involves excavation below ground level which will be hidden due to the elevated position of the quarry.
- 7.8.2 Initial works in each phase of soil stripping and construction of boundary soil mounds will introduce a disruptive element to the landscape that will be visible from many areas. However these episodes of disruption are short-lived which will reduce their impact on landscape character.
- 7.8.3 The proposed 3m high soil bunds around the proposed site boundaries will effectively screen works at and near to the surface before excavation progresses deeper, although from occasional mid distant views the very tops of the working faces will be visible which will impact on the landscape character. The shape and size of these mounds will be a disruption to the smooth landform but in distant views will be indistinguishable from the surrounding fields. More locally they will have a stronger impact but the green grass covering will help to assimilate them into their surroundings.
- 7.8.4 Throughout the working period the view, movement and noise of vehicles entering and leaving the quarry and travelling along Spicer House Lane will have a detrimental impact on the tranquillity and rural nature of the landscape.

However the estimated volume of vehicles at 10-15 vehicles per day will not have a large impact on landscape character.

- 7.8.5 Overall the impact of the works on landscape character is assessed as ***slight, adverse.***

8 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The proposed site is situated in a stepped, scarp and dip landscape typical of the upland farmland to the west of Barnsley on the edge of the Pennines. The rectilinear field pattern laid out across a smooth flowing landscape has a major influence on the character of the area. The site comprises one these fields on the north-eastern side of Whitley Edge, and Spicer Hill above it, that separates the valley of the River Don to the south west from Scout Dike valley to the north-east.
- 8.2 There are no specific designations indicating that this is a landscape of high regional or national quality. However the landscape is a good representation of the local 'Upland Farmland' landscape character with its distinctive stepped topography, intact network of stone walls, rural upland character and panoramic views, resulting in a high quality local landscape. Unfortunately the condition of the landscape is declining as the stone walls are not maintained and small pockets of woodland fail to regenerate. Also there are some urban pressures on the quiet rural landscape as the settlement of Ingbirchworth develops and traffic increases along the A629.
- 8.3 The tall wind turbines at Spicer Hill impart a uniqueness to the study area, being dominant features in many of the long vistas. Their graceful towers provide a strong focal point in the landscape that has the effect of minimising the impact of other departures from the defining elements of the landscape character.
- 8.4 Long vistas from the ridges are an intrinsic part of the landscape character of this area. The elevation of the site means that it is visible in many of these vistas from the east. However the site represents only a very small part of these wide open views and is dwarfed both by the large scale of the landscape and by the wind turbines behind.
- 8.5 The landscape character of the study area is assessed as one of **good** quality
- 8.6 Having a high intrinsic value the landscape is sensitive to change that will urbanise or industrialise this rural area. However changes involving activities of a nature and scale comparable with existing land uses could be accommodated. Small scale quarrying has been a part of the landscape here for many years, providing stone for local buildings.

Thus further small scale quarrying could be successfully assimilated without detriment into the landscape character providing the basic structure of the landscape is not compromised. The sensitivity of the landscape is assessed as **medium**.

- 8.6.1 The proposals involve quarrying stone in four phases over 10 years working from the Spicer House Lane boundary back, south westwards and upwards across the field. It is estimated that an average of 10-15 vehicles per day will be used to transport stone from the site. For each phase the soils stripped will be placed in 3 m high bunds around the boundary that will be seeded to provide screening for the works. The restoration of the quarry will be to a 'delf'-type landscape emulating the naturally re-vegetated disused Annat Royd quarry immediately to the east of the site. Overall the proposals are assessed as having a magnitude of medium proportions.
- 8.6.2 Throughout the works the site will be restored progressively leaving the minimum working area at any one time. As the restoration scheme matures the area will become very similar to the disused Annat Royd quarry. When viewed from across the valley (north-eastern side) the site will appear insignificant in the larger open view, only representing a small increase in the contrasting colour and texture that is displayed by Annat Royd quarry. The wind turbines distract the eye from small scale differences in the landscape within many of the long views. From middle and closer views the change will be more significant as a smooth green field is replaced by an irregular landform, rock faces, heath and scrub, but the change will not be detrimental, being an increase in an element already present in the immediate vicinity. As for longer views, the tall wind turbines are a dominant feature in mid to close up views of the site detracting the eye from other less dominant elements of the landscape.
- 8.6.3 The proposed woodland along Spicer House Lane boundary will partially screen the site and will also be beneficial in increasing the number of small woodlands within the upland landscape. At present many are in decline. The stone boundary walls, in need of repair at present, will be rebuilt, contributing towards improving the overall condition of the landscape. Whilst not a purely landscape character issue, the restoration scheme will provide a beneficial increase in biodiversity to the area. Leaving an indication of the quarrying process will provide cultural and historical value to the area.

- 8.6.4 Balancing the neutral factors of minor changes to long vistas, change in landform and land use with the positive factors of increasing woodland, biodiversity and repair of stone walls, the impact on the proposals on landscape character and visual amenity as assessed as **neutral**.
- 8.7 Whilst works are in progress some additional noise and movement will disrupt the peace and tranquillity of the area but visually most of the workings will be hidden below ground level (Due to the elevated position of the proposed quarry there will be no views from above). As the works progress the screen bunds will be effective in screening the long views from the east and most of the mid range to close views. However there are a few mid range views from which the tops of the working faces will be visible. At the start of each phase earth moving vehicles will be visible and some of the initial excavation works for each phase. This will be a detrimental influence on landscape character but will be relatively short lived. The initial phase 1 mounding along Spicer House Lane will be effective in screening all works from the most direct distant views, including the soil stripping of later phases. The form of the mounds themselves will represent potentially intrusive features in the landscape. However their impact will be much reduced by seeding to tie them in visually to the colour and texture of the surrounding fields. The impact of their shape will be insignificant on long vistas but will have a greater impact in mid-range and close views.
- 8.8 The impact of the proposals of low magnitude on the landscape of high value and medium sensitivity are assessed as **slight adverse** during the quarrying works declining to **neutral** after restoration.

APPENDIX A

Drawing No - CF/SH/203/3 – Landscape Character and Visibility

APPENDIX D – THRESHOLD CRITERIA USED

Landscape Quality

Landscape quality is a value placed on a landscape in a local, regional or national context. The value is based on overall landscape character, the value and importance of individual features, cultural and aesthetic qualities.

The criteria by which landscape quality has been assessed in this study are detailed below.

Exceptional/very good. Areas that exhibit a strong positive character with valued features that combine to give the experience of unity, richness and harmony. These are landscapes that may be considered to be of particular importance to conserve.

Good/medium. Areas that exhibit positive character but which may have evidence of degradation/erosion of some features. Change may be unlikely to be detrimental.

Poor/very poor. Areas generally negative in character with few, if any, valued features.

Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is defined as the ability of a landscape to accommodate change. This is related to landscape quality as areas of high landscape value are likely to be very sensitive to changes and conversely those of low landscape value are unlikely to be sensitive to change. However the type of change and the nature of the landscape will be factors in assessing sensitivity. Visibility is also important in assessing sensitivity. A more open landscape of high general visibility is likely to be more sensitive than one of high enclosure.

The criteria by which landscape sensitivity has been assessed in this study are detailed below.

High. Areas of high value and high general visibility.

Medium. Areas of high to medium value where there is some scope for change involving features that are already present to some extent within the landscape, and if it can be accommodated within pockets of low visibility within the landscape, for example in valleys, within an enclosing landform or woodland.

Low. Areas of medium to low value of little harmony and unity where change would go unnoticed amongst a disparate range of features or may have a positive impact in removing or replacing degraded or derelict features.

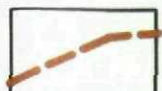
Significance of impacts

The significance of the impact of a development on landscape character and on views of the site is a function of the landscape sensitivity and the magnitude of the proposals. Landscape impacts are likely to include both positive and negative effects, to varying degrees. The overall impact of the proposals on landscape character is described according to the significance criteria set out below.

Impact score	Criteria
Major adverse.	The proposals would be at considerable variance with the local landscape. They would degrade, diminish or destroy a highly valued landscape or its characteristic features or elements. They would be substantially damaging to a high quality landscape.
Moderate adverse	The proposals would be out of scale with the landscape or at odds with the local pattern and landform. They would leave an adverse impact on a landscape of recognised quality.
Minor adverse	The proposals would not quite fit into the landform and scale of the landscape. They would affect an area of recognised landscape character.
Neutral	The proposals would complement the scale, landform and pattern of the landscape. Existing landscape quality would be maintained.
Minor beneficial	The proposals have the potential to improve the landscape quality and character; they would fit in with the scale, pattern and landform of the landscape; they would enable the restoration of valued landscape features partially lost through other land uses.
Major beneficial	The proposals would have the potential to fit in very well with the landscape character; to improve the quality of the landscape through removal of damage caused by existing land uses.



KEY

-  Proposed quarry site.
-  Ridge lines, marking approximate top of ridge
-  Wind turbines
-  Key to photographic viewpoints



cf landscape design

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project
SPICER HOUSE QUARRY.

drawing title
LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND VISIBILITY

scale As shown	date June 07	drawing no CF/SH/203/3
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APPENDIX B

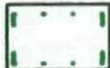
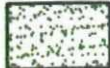
Drawing No – CF/SH/203/1

Restoration Proposals

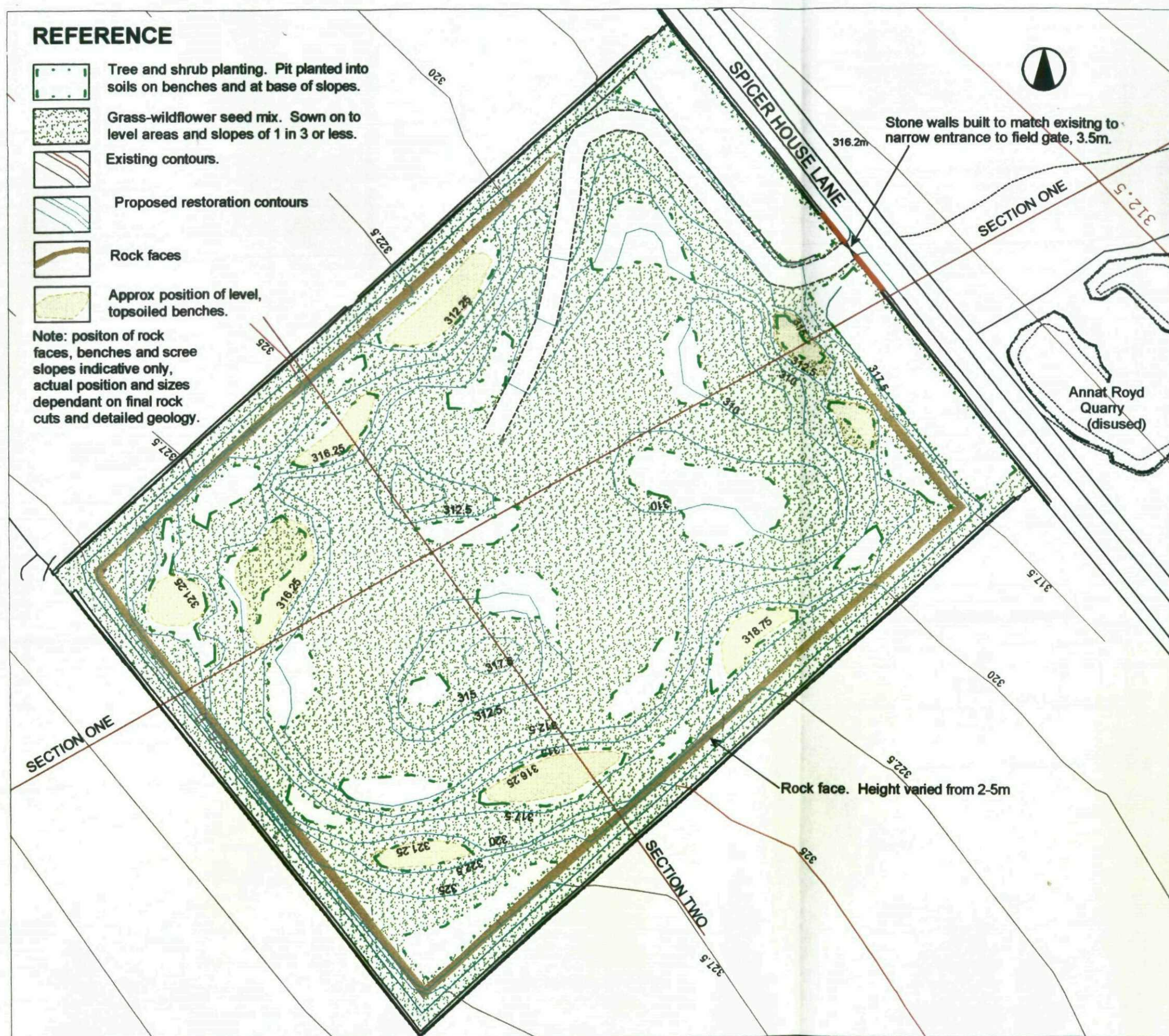
Drawing No – CF//SH/203/2

Cross Sections

REFERENCE

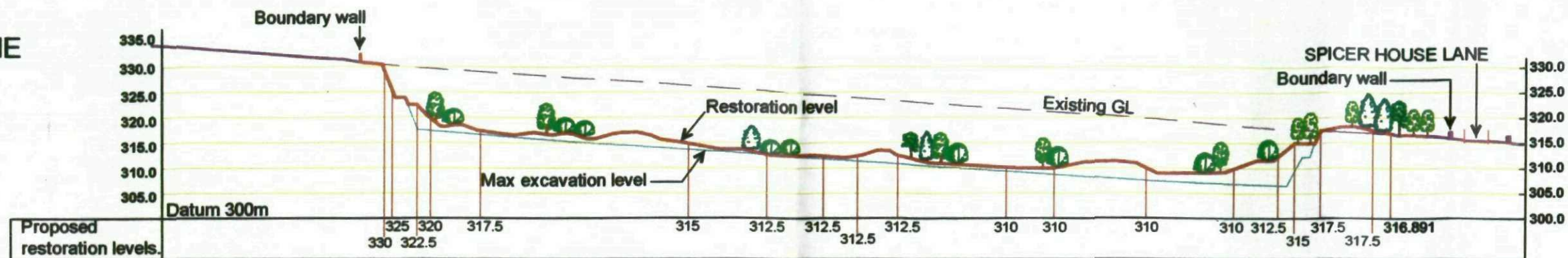
-  Tree and shrub planting. Pit planted into soils on benches and at base of slopes.
-  Grass-wildflower seed mix. Sown on to level areas and slopes of 1 in 3 or less.
-  Existing contours.
-  Proposed restoration contours.
-  Rock faces
-  Approx position of level, topsoiled benches.

Note: position of rock faces, benches and scree slopes indicative only, actual position and sizes dependant on final rock cuts and detailed geology.



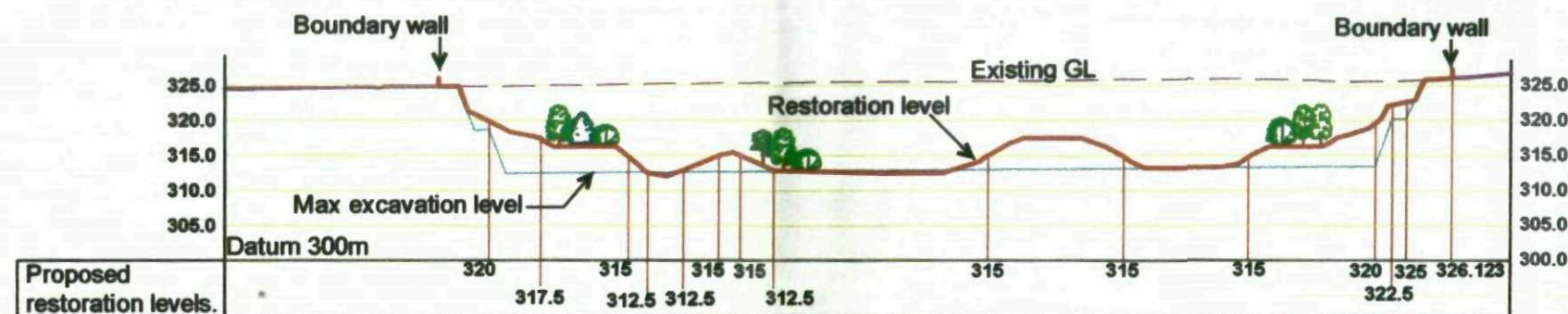
SECTION ONE

Scale 1:1000



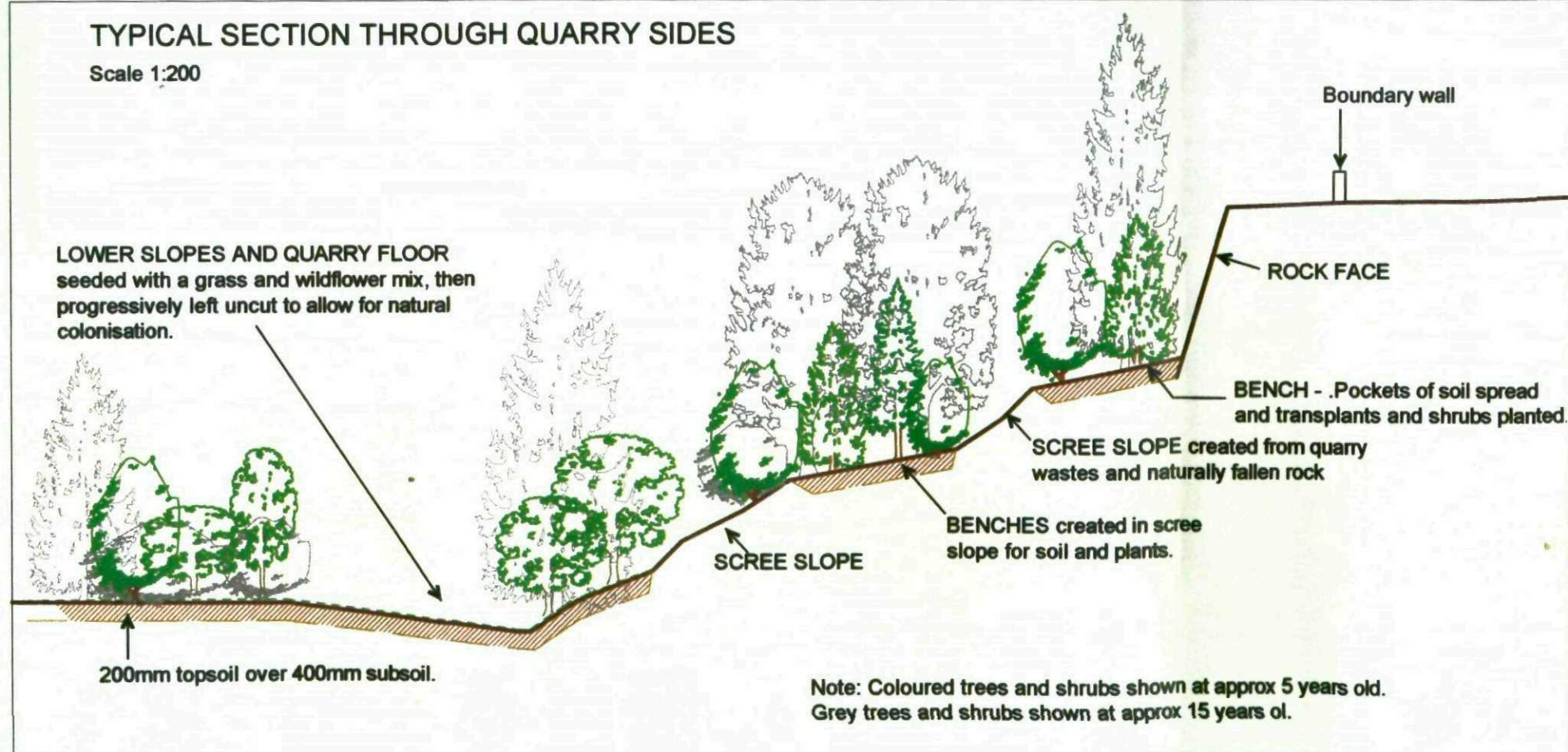
SECTION TWO

Scale 1:1000



TYPICAL SECTION THROUGH QUARRY SIDES

Scale 1:200



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project
SPICER HOUSE QUARRY.

drawing title
RESTORATION PROPOSALS

scale
1:2500

date
Jan 07

drawing no
CF/SH/203/1A

APPENDIX C

Photographic Views.

View One. From B6115. (Site outlined in red)



View Two. From A629 overlooking Broadfield Green Farm

Broadfield Farm



View Three. From A629/Lakeside View



View Four. From Scout Dike reservoir car park.



View Five. From Folly Lane



View Six. From Spicer House Lane



View Seven From Castle Hill on Windmill Lane



APPENDIX D – THRESHOLD CRITERIA USED

Landscape Quality

Landscape quality is a value placed on a landscape in a local, regional or national context. The value is based on overall landscape character, the value and importance of individual features, cultural and aesthetic qualities.

The criteria by which landscape quality has been assessed in this study are detailed below.

Exceptional/very good. Areas that exhibit a strong positive character with valued features that combine to give the experience of unity, richness and harmony. These are landscapes that may be considered to be of particular importance to conserve.

Good/medium. Areas that exhibit positive character but which may have evidence of degradation/erosion of some features. Change may be unlikely to be detrimental.

Poor/very poor. Areas generally negative in character with few, if any, valued features.

Landscape Sensitivity

Landscape sensitivity is defined as the ability of a landscape to accommodate change. This is related to landscape quality as areas of high landscape value are likely to be very sensitive to changes and conversely those of low landscape value are unlikely to be sensitive to change. However the type of change and the nature of the landscape will be factors in assessing sensitivity. Visibility is also important in assessing sensitivity. A more open landscape of high general visibility is likely to be more sensitive than one of high enclosure.

The criteria by which landscape sensitivity has been assessed in this study are detailed below.

High. Areas of high value and high general visibility.

Medium. Areas of high to medium value where there is some scope for change involving features that are already present to some extent within the landscape, and if it can be accommodated within pockets of low visibility within the landscape, for example in valleys, within an enclosing landform or woodland.

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Significance of impacts

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