

FARINGDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - Draft 2015

LOCAL JOBS

Of the new sites, **Wicklesham Quarry** is considered by local stakeholders to be a significant opportunity site that would expand the provision of local jobs. Quarrying activities have finished on this site and it is now being used for the storage of materials for golf courses pending restoration to agricultural use, according to its current permission, by mid 2015. However, it is considered that this site could be more appropriately redeveloped for employment use to provide B2/B8 industry in the town with the associated jobs. In addition, it would help to reduce the amount of heavy goods vehicles and general traffic currently using Park Road. A site of this scale could also encourage new types of businesses into the parish to help diversify the range of local jobs on offer. The development of the site would need to also deliver a safe crossing over the A420 to serve pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Any development on the site would need to be sensitively designed so as to be hidden within the landscape, and as it is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and could only proceed following completion of a geological assessment in consultation with Natural England who will ultimately sanction if development proposals are appropriate.

Planning conditions to restore the site to its original condition following cessation of quarrying activities are currently in place. Any future proposals for development should be subject to discussion with Oxfordshire County Council and the Vale of White Horse District Council to ensure that these conditions do not prevent the site from being developed for employment purposes. Natural England could accept its use as industrial land provided the essential ecological constraints are observed; it must also provide access for those wishing to access its important fossils, which could be readily accommodated by its use as an industrial site¹.

Policy 4.5B: Wicklesham Quarry

Wicklesham Quarry will be safeguarded for employment uses (Classes B2 and B8) following the completion of quarrying activities, although any development would be required to deliver safe access across the A420, principally for pedestrian and cycle use. Employment development would be supported on this site if no other suitable sites closer to the town centre are available, providing there is demonstrable need and the following criteria have been satisfactorily addressed:

- i. Appropriate transport mitigation is proposed following completion of a transport assessment to the satisfaction of the Highways Authority and District Council;***
 - ii. A landscape assessment is completed with any appropriate mitigation agreed with the District Council and other stakeholders;***
 - iii. Appropriate ecological mitigation and enhancement measures are incorporated into the proposal and***
 - iv. Given its site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation, there is a clear demonstration that any development would not harm the geological special interest of the site in consultation with Natural England and the District Council. The proposals shall incorporate measures to provide access to the protected site for the visiting public so that the special geological interest is better revealed and provision made for the protection and enhancement of the geodiversity interest of Wicklesham Quarry.***
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