OXFORDSHIRE
STRATEGIC RAIL FREIGHT INTERCHANGE

Applicant Response to Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd (RR-130)

Document 10.2
Revision V1

On behalf of
Oxfordshire Railfreight Limited

Prepared by Oxfordshire Railfrieght Limited
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This document provides Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations submitted by Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd which were not included in the Applicant's Comments on Relevant Representations submitted at Procedural Deadline A (see – Document 9.1/PDA-007).

1.2 Section 2.0 overleaf provides RR-130 and the Applicant's response.

2.0 Applicant Response to Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd (RR-130)

RR Reference	Name/Organisation	Summary of Representation	Applicant Response
RR-130	Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd	Smith & Sons (Bletchington) Ltd is a local quarrying company based in Oxfordshire operating 5 quarries, one of which is Dewars Farm Quarry which is located in close proximity to the proposed development. Smiths object to the proposed development as it does not accord with Oxfordshire's Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy 2017. The Minerals Planning Objectives state "*Safeguard important known resources of sharp sand and gravel, soft sand, crushed rock and fullers earth to ensure that those resources are not needlessly sterilised and remain potentially available for future use and are considered in future development decisions*." Policy M3 of the core strategy states that principal locations for aggregate minerals extraction will be within the following strategic resource areas and highlights one of the crushed rock areas to be the area north west of Bicester - this area covers the proposed development site including the proposed Middleton Stoney by-pass. Smiths consider these areas to be strategic extensions to their existing Dewars Farm Quarry and therefore wish these areas to	The presence of a limestone resource beneath the Application Site is acknowledged and has been assessed in detail within the Minerals Assessment (Document 6.11C, **APP-288**) which forms part of ES Chapter 11: Ground Conditions (Document 6.11, **APP-179**). The Application Site lies within a large Minerals Safeguarding Area for crushed rock. The Minerals Assessment recognises that a potentially viable limestone resource is present within the site. While the Applicant acknowledges Smiths & Sons' commercial interest in potential future quarry extensions beyond the currently permitted quarry area, no allocation or planning permission exists for mineral extraction beneath the Application Site. The presence of a minerals safeguarding area does not create a presumption that the resource will be worked. The Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Part 1: Core Strategy) expressly recognises that non-mineral development may be permitted within a Minerals Safeguarding Area where the need for the development outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to the mineral resource, or where appropriate measures are taken to minimise sterilisation (see Policy M8 and also the policy reference in ES Appendix 11.8 'National and Local Policy Extracts' (Document 6.11H, **APP-293**). The Minerals Assessment (Document 6.11C, **APP-288**) explains that extraction of the resource prior to development would be neither realistic nor practicable. The scale of extraction required would significantly exceed market demand, conflict with the delivery of OxSRFI, and extend well beyond the

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		be safeguarded for future mineral extraction	relevant plan period. Furthermore, the Proposed Development incorporates mitigation measures consistent with national and local minerals policy. Approximately 3.8 million m³ of site-won soils and rock would be reused as part of the earthworks and construction process, maximising the beneficial use of excavated limestone on-site, reducing demand for imported aggregate, and minimising mineral sterilisation. The assessment and the Highways Design Approach Document (Document 5.5C, **AS-051**) also confirm that the Proposed Development would not prejudice the extraction of the currently permitted extent of Dewars Farm Quarry, including the area approved under permission MW.0049/23. In particular, the proposed Middleton Stoney Relief Road would not affect the ability of the quarry operator to work the full extent of the currently permitted reserves. The Applicant's assessment considers that, as set out in the National Networks National Policy Statement (NPS), there is a *"compelling need for an expanded network of SRFIs throughout the country"* (NPS paragraph 3.103), and this overriding need demonstrably outweighs the economic and sustainability considerations relating to this mineral resource. The Applicant considers that having regard to the significant and compelling need for the OxSRFI scheme, the proposed approach to mineral safeguarding and resource utilisation accords with the intent of Policy M8 and represents an appropriate balance between mineral safeguarding objectives and the delivery of nationally significant infrastructure.