

3 SITE DESCRIPTION

3.1 Current Site Use

3.1.1 The proposed development site is the head office of Barr at Killoch, near Ochiltree, which currently incorporates a number of office and storage buildings, asphalt plant and associated infrastructure (operated by Breedon Aggregates), Killoch Training Centre and bare ground used as a laydown area for equipment and storage of materials. In addition, there is a visitor/employee car park and a weighbridge which will be retained as part of the proposed development.

3.2 Location and Setting

3.2.1 The site is located approximately 14km east of Ayr and 9km west of Cumnock, adjacent to the A70. The site is located approximately 2.5km south west of the village of Ochiltree (as shown on Drawing LE12479-001). The approximate centre of the site is at OS National Grid Reference NS 47868 20322.

3.2.2 The site is situated within an existing industrial site immediately adjacent to the A70 within a rural setting.

3.2.3 The site is located in an area dominated by farmland. To the south of the site is the A70 with farmland beyond. To the west and north lies a coal transfer area operated by Hargreaves. This area, and the area to the north of the site, were once part of Killoch Colliery.

3.2.4 The Hargreaves area to the west and north of the site, receives coal from nearby mines via road transport and the coal is then transferred to the rail network within the coal transfer area. There is no coal mining undertaken on the Hargreaves premises. To the north east of the site, outside the site boundary, is an electrical substation and access road, with farmland beyond.

3.3 Site Size and Ownership

3.3.1 The proposed development covers an area of approximately 8.1 hectares (ha). The 'red line' application area is shown on Drawing Number 14113_PL01. The entire site lies within Barr's ownership.

3.4 Site History

3.4.1 Historical topographical mapping suggests that the site remained largely unchanged until Killoch Colliery was first recorded on the 1958 mapping. Until this time, the site

is considered to be greenfield with only farming activity recorded on published historical mapping. After the 1958 mapping, the site formed part of the larger Killoch Colliery, with mining activities present until 1987 (reference Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland website). Winding towers existed on site when the Killoch site was operated as a coal mining and processing facility. Since the 1990 mapping, coal mining activities appear (according to the published historical mapping) to have ceased, and the site has been used as 'Killoch Disposal Point' until the present day mapping.

- 3.4.2 Similarly, offsite, the area was largely undeveloped until the 1958 mapping, when Killoch Colliery (which extended on and beyond the current site boundary) is recorded. During its operation, a railway connection was in operation and serviced the site. This railway connection terminated at the colliery with an area of railway sidings which are located north of the current application site boundary.

3.5 Operating Hours

- 3.5.1 The site is permitted to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and will continue to operate in this way.

3.6 Site Access

- 3.6.1 The site is accessed from the A70 that runs adjacent to the south of the site and was engineered to handle heavy industrial traffic.

3.7 Residential Receptors

- 3.7.1 There are a number of scattered private dwellings, farms and smaller clusters of dwellings within the area. The closest are: Killoch Farm on the immediate opposite (southern) side of the A70 road (30-35m to the south); Killochside, approximately 300m to the west; Provost Mount, approximately 360m to the south; Creoch House, approximately 650m to the north west; Lessnessock Bungalows, approximately 700m to the south east; Ardmhor, and Lessnessock, approximately 745m to the north west and south east, respectively; and High Tarbeg, approximately 400m to the north east.