



July 25, 2024

Ryan Howser
El Paso County
Planning & community Development Department
2880 International Circle, Suite 110
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

RE: Solberg Gravel Pit
Application for Site Development Plan

Dear Mr. Howser,

Please accept this application on behalf of Russell Solberg of Solberg Gravel LLC (Solberg). The owner of the property is Solberg Gravel LLC, 13745 Garrett Road, Peyton, CO 80831; phone (619) 9972-6986; stuntpup@aol.com. The operator and applicant is Kevin Peart, Holcim WCR, Inc. (Holcim); 1687 Cole Blvd. Suite 300, Golden, CO 80401; contact for the application is Angela M. Bellantoni Ph.D. of Environmental Alternatives Inc., P.O. Box 326, Cañon City, CO 81215, (719) 275-8951; angela@envalternatives.com.

The Solberg Gravel Pit is located at 5445 Curtis Road, Peyton, CO 80831 at the southwest corner of the intersection of Curtis Road and Garrett Road in eastern El Paso County. The subject parcel is the western most parcel in the Solberg Gravel Pit with tax schedule number 4321000010. The parcel is zoned A-35 and is not subject to overlay zoning. El Paso County approved a Special Use Amendment on December 28, 2023 for mineral extraction on the subject parcel.

The subject parcel is an extension of the existing Solberg Gravel Pit. The acres are for mineral extraction only. All utilities and support operations are located on the east side of the current operation. New utilities and support operations will not be required. Traffic will not change as current employees will perform mining and annual production will not change. The subject parcel increases the aggregate resource and extends the life of the mine as described in the approved Special Use Amendment.

The Solberg Gravel Pit Site Development Plan demonstrates conformance with the following standards listed in 5.2.34 Mineral and Natural Resources Extraction.

- (1) **Consistent with Master Plan.** The operation shall be consistent with the Master Plan for Extraction of Commercial Mineral Deposits.

Based on the Master Plan adopted May 26, 2021, the Solberg Gravel Pit is a use consistent with the needs and future development of the county. The Solberg Gravel Pit is located in the Rural land use area designated in the Master Plan. The subject parcels are agricultural use and are

established mineral extraction. The mine is not located within a Key Area subject to annexation. The Master Plan's twofold objective is to evaluate established land use and predict future needs of evolving regions and communities. The Solberg Gravel Pit is an established land use that has provided a basic, reliable, cost effective and necessary resource to the utility, infrastructure and construction industries for over 40 years. Having a construction aggregate source near regional commercial centers as well as established and developing residential communities manages fuel costs to transport the material to its end use thus providing affordable construction material.

- (2) **No Adverse Long-Term Visual Impacts.** The operation shall have no adverse long-term visual impact either from adjacent properties or major transportation corridors.

Pursuant to CO DRMS, mining operations must be reclaimed in accordance with an approved reclamation plan. DRMS approved the permit amendment on August 16, 2021 that included specific final land use reclamation including grading, slope construction and revegetation to range land to resume cattle ranching.

- (3) **Reclaimed to a Compatible Use.** The land on which the operation is located shall be reclaimed to a use and character compatible with surrounding uses and zoning.

The Solberg Gravel Pit has existed in harmony with the neighborhood and allowable land uses in the vicinity for 40 years. Residential large-lot development is mixed with agricultural use south of Garrett Road. The primary area land use is agricultural for cattle grazing and ranch homes with outbuildings.

- (4) **Operation to Result in Efficient Use of Resource.** The operation shall result in an efficient use of the mineral deposit.

The Solberg Gravel Pit began operating in 1981. Pioneer became the operator in 2011 with Holcim becoming the operator in January, 2023. The previously approved DRMS mine permit boundary encompassed 234 acres. Unique to the Solberg quarry is the quantity and grade of sand along with water rights. The sand meets construction standards for use in cement and concrete production. The historic water rights present on the land enable the operator to produce washed sand which removes dirt and clay from the sand product. Eastern El Paso County construction projects, both private and public, and concrete/cement plants throughout the state use material produced from this quarry.

- (5) **Disturbance of Sensitive Environment Limited.** The operation shall not substantially disturb uniquely sensitive environmental features including but not limited to wetlands, riparian habitats, wildlife habitats, threatened or endangered species habitat, high priority land for conservation, and rare or unusual natural features.

The subject parcels were agricultural land for cattle grazing prior to development as a construction material mining operation. During the DRMS amendment application and review process wetlands, wetlands, riparian habitats, wildlife habitats, threatened or endangered

species habitat, high priority land for conservation, and rare or unusual natural features were not identified.

- (6) **Disturbance of Historic Resources Limited.** The use shall not substantially disturb identified historical, archaeological or pale ontological sites.

Neither Solberg Gravel LLC nor Holcim are aware of any historical, archaeological or pale ontological sites within the permit boundary. In the event a cultural resource is encountered, mining in the vicinity of the artifact will cease and History Colorado and the county will be notified.

- (7) **Buffering Required.** The site and associated special use operations shall be adequately buffered from surrounding properties and uses.

Mining is buffered from surrounding properties and uses by perimeter berms and operations below ground surface elevation of surrounding properties. The operation is visible to vehicles for approximately 800 ft traveling east from the intersection of Garrett Road and Curtis.

- (8) **Water Supply Adequate for Operations and Reclamation Uses.** Adequate water supplies shall be available for drinking, dust control, landscaping, general operations and effective reclamation. Proof of approved water supply shall be provided to PCD.

Water is obtained from two onsite wells: Well Permit 85275-F and 85276-F. Both wells are permitted for commercial and industrial use including dust suppression and wet plant operations.

- (9) **Mitigation of Impacts to Adjacent Properties.** Adverse impacts from vibration, noise, glare, blowing or flowing materials, or odors shall be mitigated to ensure minimal impacts to adjacent properties and travelers.

Off-site vibration, glare and odor is not anticipated and has not been an impact to adjacent properties and travelers since the operation began in 1981. The mine complies with county noise requirements. Mining equipment and haul trucks operation in the bottom of the quarry at least 30 feet below initial ground surface. The surrounding mine walls or soil berm absorb sound serving as a noise barrier. The perimeter mine walls will be maintained throughout the life of the mine. Fugitive dust is controlled with regular application of water to mine faces and stockpiles. All mined material is processed through a wash plant to produce clean gravel and sand for construction projects and concrete production. The mine operates under a Construction Permit 11EP3452 issued by the Air Pollution Control Division of CDPHE.

- (10) **Commercial Mineral Deposit Required.** A commercial mineral deposit as defined by State Statute shall exist on the land on which the operation will be located.

The mineral resource meets the definition of CRS § 34-1-302: a natural mineral deposit of limestone used for construction purposes, coal, sand, gravel, and quarry aggregate, for which extraction by an extractor is or will be commercially feasible and regarding which it can be demonstrated by geologic, mineralogic, or other scientific data that such deposit has significant economic or strategic value to the area, state, or nation. The Solberg Pit was the source of 766,938 tons of sand and gravel in 2021. This is a significant contribution to the construction and infrastructure industry in El Paso County.

(11) Site Security and Safety. Adequate site security and safety plans shall be provided at all times.

The mine has a security gate that is locked at the close of business each day. All traffic entering the mine must be recognized by the scale house attendant before proceeding into the mine. The mine operates under the Mine Health and Safety Administration (MSHA) that includes employee training and agency inspections.

(12) Hours of Operation. Hours of operation shall be compatible with neighboring uses, traffic volumes, affected transportation corridors and school bus operations, and designated pedestrian crosswalk activity over the lifetime of the operation.

The mine operates up to six days each week and up to 10 hours each day depending on construction industry demand. These hours are consistent with the operations since 2011 when Solberg Gravel LLC secured Pioneer Sand Company as the operator of the mine. The mine traffic has been compatible with neighboring uses, traffic volumes, affected transportation corridors and school bus operations. No designated pedestrian crosswalk activity is in the vicinity.

(13) Reclamation of Visual and Environmental Impacts. Reclamation of adverse visual and other environmental impacts shall take place within a reasonable and specified time frame.

Reclamation of adverse visual and other environmental impacts in accordance with the CO DRMS approved reclamation plan as provided herein as Exhibit A: CO DRMS Reclamation Plan.

(14) Mineral Processing. Mineral processing such as material washing, sorting, crushing or more intensive modification and alteration through mechanical or chemical means to a mineral resource extracted within the same ownership as the mineral extraction operation is prohibited unless specifically approved as part of the special use. If processing is to occur on the property where a special use is requested for mineral extraction, then the special use cannot be approved administratively, and the public hearing process to review the special use will be triggered.

The applicant accepts the public hearing process required by the county to consider the Special Use application.

The Solberg Gravel Pit Site Development Plan meets the criteria listed in 5.3.2(C) Special Use Criteria as follows.

- The use is generally consistent with the applicable Master Plan;

Based on the Master Plan adopted May 26, 2021, the Solberg Gravel Pit is a use consistent with the needs and future development of the county. The Solberg Gravel Pit is located in the Rural land use area designated in the Master Plan. The subject parcels are agricultural use and are established mineral extraction. The mine is not located within a Key Area subject to annexation. The Master Plan's twofold objective is to evaluate established land use and predict future needs of evolving regions and communities. The Solberg Gravel Pit is an established land use that has provided a basic, reliable, cost effective and necessary resource to the utility, infrastructure and construction industries for over 40 years. Having a construction aggregate source near regional commercial centers as well as established and developing residential communities manages fuel costs to transport the material to its end use thus providing affordable construction material.

- The use will be in harmony with the character of the neighborhood, and will generally be compatible with the existing and allowable land uses in the surrounding area;

The Solberg Gravel Pit has existed in harmony with the neighborhood and allowable land uses in the vicinity for 40 years. Residential large-lot development is mixed with agricultural use south of Garrett Road. The primary area land use is agricultural for cattle grazing and ranch homes with outbuildings.

- The impact of the use does not overburden or exceed the capacity of public facilities and services, or, in the alternative, the special use application demonstrates that it will provide adequate public facilities in a timely and efficient manner;

The mining operation requires electricity and emergency services in the event of an accident. Mine operations rely on water from two wells that are CO DWR permitted as Permit No. 85275-F and 85276-F (Exhibit B). Potable water is supplied as bottled water to employees.

- The use will not create unmitigated traffic congestion or traffic hazards in the surrounding area, and has adequate, legal access;

The mine has operated since 1981 with the current traffic volume and pattern since 2012. Mine traffic has not created traffic congestion or traffic hazards on Garrett or Curtis Road. Material is transported offsite on two haul routes; north on Curtis Road and west on Garrett Road. The majority of haul vehicles will leave the site going north on Curtis Rd, and then turn west on Garrett Road. Hwy 24 is the destination from Garrett road as this route allows haul vehicles to deliver to the market in Colorado Springs. A small number of haul vehicles will leave the site and stay north on Curtis Rd to deliver material to the north or east of the site. Passenger cars/trucks will also use these routes. The proposed acreage increase will not change the mining operation and traffic generation. The mine has a developed and efficient access onto Curtis Road that includes a right turn lane into the access from Curtis Road. Y2K Engineering LLC performed a traffic analysis and impact study that is submitted with this application.

- The use will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations regarding air, water, light, or noise pollution;

Solberg Gravel LLC agrees to comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws and regulations. DRMS approved the permit amendment on August 16, 2021. The mine operates under a Construction Permit 11EP3452F (Exhibit C) issued by the Air Pollution Control Division of CDPHE. The mine operations under the CO Discharge Permit COG502217 (Exhibit D) issued by Water Quality Control Division of CDPHE.

- The use will not otherwise be detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare of the present or future residents of El Paso County; and/or

The mine has not been detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare of the present residents of El Paso County and will not be detrimental to future residents.

- The use conforms or will conform to all other applicable County rules, regulations or ordinances. Solberg understands that the 1981 to current day mine is a non-conforming land use. With the intent to expand into the parcel to the west, it is accepted that the county requires a Special Use permit application that is comprehensive to the operation, including all 313 acres approved by DRMS. The mine will conform to all other applicable County rules, regulations or ordinances.

In summary, the Solberg Gravel Pit has been in operation since 1981. The mine operation will not change regarding operating equipment, number of employees, hours of operation and truck hauling traffic. The additional acres will extend the life of the mine and ensure that the availability of construction aggregate and sand exists for current and future projects in El Paso County.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at (719) 275-8951 or angela@envalternatives.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela M. Bellantoni

Angela M. Bellantoni Ph.D.