

29th August 2018

MINERAL SITES PLAN HEARING STATEMENT

RE: Bournemouth, Dorset & Poole Mineral Sites Plan Examination. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for Swanworth Quarry Extension.

This statement responds to a number of issues contained within the latest landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) for the proposed extension at Swanworth Quarry. The LVIA has been produced by David Jarvis Associates on behalf of Suttle Stone Quarries. This response does not seek to replace earlier submissions made by the AONB Team, which remain valid.

The LVIA follows a format that is broadly consistent with the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment. It contains relevant information to enable an assessment of the effects of the proposal, with the exception that the Purbeck Heritage Coast, within which the site is located, is not shown on the plans that have been produced.

The assessment seeks to demonstrate the ability of the proposals to meet the third part of the major development test contained within NPPF, i.e. the degree to which the scale and extent of the effects on the landscape can be moderated. However, it is difficult to reconcile the conclusions of the LVIA with detailed elements of the assessment provided.

The bulk of the LVIA's assessment of effects are provided within tables 4 and 5. Across the assessments there is a tendency to emphasise the 'temporary' nature of the effects that will occur. It is not considered that the term 'temporary' is suitable. Rather, the effects are long term and assumed to be largely reversible (from an aesthetic perspective). Nonetheless, as stated within table 4, the 'wider AONB' is predicted to experience a substantial negative effect during the long term operational period.

Table 5 provides an assessment of effects on visual receptors. These are generally considered to have high sensitivity, except for road users. Although the roads assessed are not formally recognised as scenic routes, they are well used by visitors, who are considered to have high sensitivity. Consequently, the assessment of sensitivity of road users is arguable too low, which is a matter that is likely to affect the assessment of the significance of the visual effects. With this in mind, and considering the assessment of visual effects for the car park at Worth Matravers and the various footpaths (with the exception of the very distant VP12), the assessor clearly identifies a number of locations where receptors would experience significant adverse effects during the operational period.

The assessment identifies a notable number of significant adverse landscape and visual effects. However, the conclusion asserts, without detailed reasoning, that: "There are very limited viewpoints from which any parts of the proposal could be seen (see Figure 9). Even these could be mitigated further at detailed design /application stage (such as the stretch of the Purbeck Way at VPs 3 & 4)." The conclusions also wrongly assert that there will be no cumulative effects. There are locations where the retained facilities within the existing quarry and aspects of development required for the extension area would be seen and/or heard both in combination and in sequence. Furthermore, there are clearly some sequential cumulative effects, for example on users of the B3069, when considering the proposed extension and Purbeck Stone quarries in the wider area.

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