

Cluster 4 - Moreton Area of Dorset: AS-19 Woodsford Extension, AS-25 Station Road and AS-26 Hurst Farm

Submission by ID: 1148225, Mr John Wickenden Questions 50 to 60

My name is John Wickenden BSc(Hons) Physics, FInstP (retired). I am a resident of Moreton for 15 years and familiar with all three sites which together with the existing Woodsford quarry represents the desecration of 1000 acres of Thomas Hardy "Valley of the Great Dairies". This written submission is a personal statement.

50. Given their close proximity to each other, have these sites' potential cumulative effects been adequately assessed including traffic impacts, harm to landscape, residents' visual and other amenity, and the historic environment?

These three sites together with the existing Woodsford Quarry cover an area of 1000 acres along the River Frome Valley known through Thomas Hardy's works as the "Valley of the Great Dairies". They impact not just on Moreton but also the villages/hamlets of Woodsford, Tincleton, Pallington, Waddock Cross, Hurst and Crossways. Traffic impact would also include Warmwell, Affpuddle and Bere Regis.

There have been many objections raised to the 3 sites during the two consultations not only from local residents and businesses but also from international organisations that recognise the special nature of Moreton and the Frome Valley. The campaign group FRAME (Frome Residents Against Mineral Extraction) has invested huge amounts of energy and time to raise awareness of what mineral extraction will mean to 1000 acres of the River Frome Valley.

The cumulative effects not only arise from mineral extraction but also from proposed huge housing developments at Crossways, Silverlakes and Moreton station all within the planning period of the Minerals Plan. These housing developments have all been declared in Purbeck and West Dorset local plans. Despite MP intervention I do not believe the cumulative impact of the combined developments has been taken into account sufficiently seriously. The Working Group set up by the DCC in response to the MP has been ineffective in addressing the cumulative impact on the community and making representations to the DCC, merely acting as an information exchange forum. (cf minutes of Crossways Moreton Joint Working Group; link:- <https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/purbeck/joint-working-with-other-councils/joint-working-with-other-councils.aspx>; Dates of meetings: 28/4/16, 13/12/16, 21/3/17, 12/6/17, 5/12/17).

Traffic Impacts

The cumulative impact of existing traffic, quarry traffic and housing development traffic has not been adequately addressed. Please see response to Question 52 below.

Landscape

The landscape of the River Frome Valley is there today for all to see. When 1000 acres is dug up and unsightly bunds put in place along the roads this will no longer be the case for decades. Restoration can never put this back; the landscape Thomas Hardy describes in his books will be lost forever. The major visitor attraction of Sculpture-by-the-Lakes at Pallington trades on the beauty and tranquillity of the site. Noise and loss of views across the River Frome (SSSI) is a major impact to this business

which the DCC claims is so important to the economy of the county. The same argument can be made on the impact on the village of Moreton and its internationally recognised attractions (eg TE Lawrence's Grave and Church with Whistler windows where silence is understandably a major feature).

The minerals plan still fails to recognise the impact on Moreton Conservation zone (cf Purbeck District Council Conservation Officer's comments in the examination library). He stated that there would be significant impact. The major feature of Moreton estate is its road approach through The Avenue (aka Station Road) and the landscape on both sides. AS25 will destroy this. The setting of Moreton Estate should be protected through implementation of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act of 1990.

The recent report by the Landowner's agent for AS25 and AS26 is misleading concerning views across these two sites from adjacent properties (some listed). Some software has been used to define the views taking into account effects of existing hedge and tree screening. The software has clearly not taken into account the loss of leaf cover during winter (vegetation mostly deciduous) and has completely ignored the view across AS25 from the significant property of Moreford Hall. This cannot be screened due to its height above the fields.

The inspector should be made aware that Hurst Farm dairy buildings are within AS26 the destruction of which has never been acknowledged in the assessments nor has the economic impact been investigated. It is likely that the whole of the farming enterprise across AS19, AS25 and AS26 and beyond will be compromised and good quality farmland lost to the nation forever.

Historic Environment

Please see submissions by Dr Simon Collcutt of Oxford Archaeology.

51. [Should more direction be given in the DGs on mitigating cumulative effects to an acceptable level?](#)

Probably but usual mitigation practice will not overcome the impacts highlighted by objectors.

52. [The SA indicates that the main areas of cumulative traffic impact are likely to be along the B3390 and particularly the two narrow Hurst Bridges and the Waddock Cross junction, where there has previously been an accident problem. Does the transport assessment adequately consider and resolve these potential impacts taking account of all minerals and other built development in the area?](#)

It is incorrect to say that lorry movements will be any greater (or indeed less) than from existing and previously quarried sites as has been stated by DCC Highways. The existing or worked sites at Warmwell typically exited in a westerly direction along by-passes for Crossways and West Stafford to the A35. AS25 and AS26 movements will have to be along the B3390 firstly going north over three narrow River Frome bridges, then along Bovington Road, through Bere Regis to the A35/A31 (or alternatively through very windy and narrow roads through Affpuddle). In both cases lorries will traverse the accident black spot of Waddock Cross junction. There has yet again been a recent accident where the DCC Highways have had to take out vegetation to widen views thus negating their statement in the consultations that visibility was adequate to take extra traffic. Similarly the DCC Highways seem to be in denial over the capacity of Hurst Bridge (categorised as an ancient monument). Every year the bridge has had to be repaired due to traffic accidents at considerable

public expense. There are many properties along the B3390 at Hurst and Waddock Cross that are immediately off the road (in some cases less than 1 metre from the edge). Today's very heavy tonnage lorries will cause damage to foundations.

The traffic survey cited by the Authority for the B3390 is flawed in that it was conducted at non-peak time. The peak time traffic particularly in the morning includes large numbers of cars for Bovington Camp and Winfrith Technology Park. Aggregate lorry movements also peak at around this time. The highways view has ignored the cumulative impact of aggregates movements, housing development traffic and back-fill lorry movements (required for restoration). It should be remembered that pedestrians are often seen walking along the B3390 from Moreton Railway Station along the road (no footpath) to the attractions in Moreton Village (including campsites). The national cycle network also crosses the B3390 at the junction of Station Road and the B3390.

The DCC's own policy states that sand and gravel should not be transported more than 40 miles from a given pit. It is evident that this guidance is being ignored (just see the addresses on the lorries making these movements on a given day).

54. I note that the traffic modelling in the Moreton/Crossways/Woodsford Traffic Impact Assessments 2016 appear to be based on a SATURN model of the Crossways area created in 1999, although the network was audited and the model altered to reflect current conditions. How have changes in development between then and the 2016 base year been taken into account within the assessment?

I don't believe they have.

55. In its Site Assessment comments on AS-25 and AS-26, Highways England refers to traffic modelling only being inter-peak period. Has this now been resolved to include all peak periods?

I don't believe it has.

56. Also Highways England refers to the conclusion that there will be less traffic on the network as only two sites will be operating in the future and it asks for clarification. Would the Councils please clarify?

This conclusion is not true for AS25 and AS26. Please see my response above.

57. I understand from representations that there is a proposal to designate a Dorset National Park within the lifetime of the MSP and that it would include the area covered by these three sites. What is the position with this proposal and does it need to be referenced in the MSP?

The proposal does cover the whole area of the River Frome Valley impacted by AS19, AS25 and AS26. (Please find appendix (a), map of proposed National Park). In the proposed National Park, the area is called Egdon Heath (cf National Park website for more details; link:- <https://www.dorsetnationalpark.com/>). The park proposers have conducted studies of the areas involved as part of making their case to government. One study covers Thomas Hardy country; link:- https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/853df9_c0747d6edb22435396ad79de85bbe34d.pdf. I also append the document to this submission (b).

The case for Dorset National Park is gaining significant support and in all likelihood will happen within the time frame of the Minerals Plan. Digging up 1000 acres of "Egdon Heath" must surely be an embarrassment to the DCC who are also actively supporting the park proposal.

58. The DGs indicate that AS-25 and AS-26 will not be worked simultaneously. How is this likely to work in practice and does it have implications for working the two sites within the Plan period?

Yes, regarding the need for AS25 minerals and the development timelines. It has been stated by DCC in the plan that AS25 and AS26 would not be simultaneously worked and that the processing plant would be sited on AS26 (not AS25). The tonnages predicted for AS26 and the time it will take to extract and process the minerals means that AS25 cannot be worked within the timeline of the plan. Additionally the tonnages stated for AS25 are not required to meet the DCCs quota for sand and gravel.

59. According to the Halletec site investigation of June 2018 the sand and gravel resource for AS-25 and AS26 appears to be present throughout the whole site and includes both Poole Formation and River Terrace sand and gravel of commercial quality. I understand that the figures represent an increase of about 30% over previous estimates, which did not show the Poole Formation resource.

- a) Should MSP Policy MS 1 be modified to reflect the increase and subdivision of resource?
- b) Do the DGs require any modification as a result of this investigation?

The DCC policy states that the sites for consideration will in the first instance be based on BGS data (Area of Search). This was clearly not considered at the time AS25 was proposed by the Landowner as the BGS data shows only half of AS25 as having sand and gravel (cf BGS maps). So the site should not have been considered in the first place. The very recent borehole data has not been released to the public but a summary report has which states that there is sand and gravel across the whole site including Poole Formation soft sand. Given that the water table is close to the surface this means that quarrying will be undertaken sub-water table creating additional environmental impact not considered by the assessments (particularly the Sustainability Appraisal).

It is known from Woodsford quarry (Hills Group) that the quality of a proportion of aggregate is poor and additional cleaning is required requiring additional settlement lagoons (subject of a recent planning application which was refused). The Hills Quarry and Woodsford Community liaison meeting was told that "grey" sand is being stockpiled and the company are having difficulty selling this product (please note: liaison meeting minutes have not been posted to the Hills Quarry website since 2016.)

60. Should the DGs for each site make reference to this cluster of three?

Yes. Together with existing Woodsford quarry the three sites represent a 1000 acres of Thomas Hardy Country which I and many objectors value greatly. The landscape will be lost forever. These sites should not be in the plan.

John Wickenden, Fir Tree Cottage, Moreton
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Appendices

- (a) Map of proposed Dorset National Park
- (b) Dorset National Park case study: Thomas Hardy Heritage.