

# **Public Questions and Statements for the Regulatory Committee on 22 March 2018**

## **Agenda Item 5 – Land East of Binnegar lane and South of Pubbletown Road through to land rear of Binnegar Hall, Binnegar**

### Statements

1. Rob Westel, Estates and Planning Director at Raymond Brown, the applicants

## **Agenda Item 6 – Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester**

### Statements

2. Dr Simon Collcutt, heritage consultant instructed by Knightsford Parish Council
3. Tony Meader, Woodsford Parish Council
4. Jennifer Meader
5. Nick Dunn, Applicant's Planning Agent
6. Nigel Hill, Resident of Moreton
7. Abby Bryant, Consultancy Director - Hills Quarry Products Ltd

## Statements

### 1. Statement from Rob Westel, Estates and Planning Director at Raymond Brown, the applicants, in relation to Land East of Binnegar lane and South of Puddletown Road through to land rear of Binnegar Hall, Binnegar

Thank you Chair, Councillors. My name is Rob Westell and I am Estates and Planning Director at Raymond Brown, the applicants.

The two applications before you appear complex in nature, but what is actually proposed is remarkably straightforward.

The present situation is that we are hauling sand approximately a mile by quarry dumptruck across Puddletown Road from the quarry workings to the processing plant. We are under obligation to our landlord to vacate the current processing plant site during the course of 2018. All options for relocating the processing plant have been considered, the most suitable option being that which is now before you.

It is proposed to erect a new plant in the base of the current quarry workings, within and adjacent to the remaining mineral reserve. This brings a number of benefits:

- The new plant will not be visible or audible from anywhere but within the quarry itself.
- The need to cross Puddletown Road with heavy mobile plant will be removed.
- Haulage distance will be dramatically reduced, saving circa 22,000 dumper miles and circa 124 tonnes of carbon dioxide per annum.
- The restoration scheme for the quarry will not change, only the timing of restoration of the area in which the plant will be located. We have agreed to enter into a legal obligation for the long-term management of the whole of our lease area lasting 25 years beyond completion of restoration.
- Silt Management in the adjacent quarry void will aid in restoration levels tying in with the existing heathland restoration and enhancing the setting of Battery Bank.

Councillors, I commend these applications to you.

2. Statement from Dr Simon Collcutt, heritage consultant instructed by Knightsford Parish Council, in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

I am Dr. Simon Collcutt, a professional heritage consultant instructed by Knightsford Parish Council concerning Applications WD/D/15/001057 & 1/E/2005/0742/AuC. I seek leave to speak before the Regulatory Committee of 01/03/2018 and submit the summary Statement below, in accordance with the Council's rules.

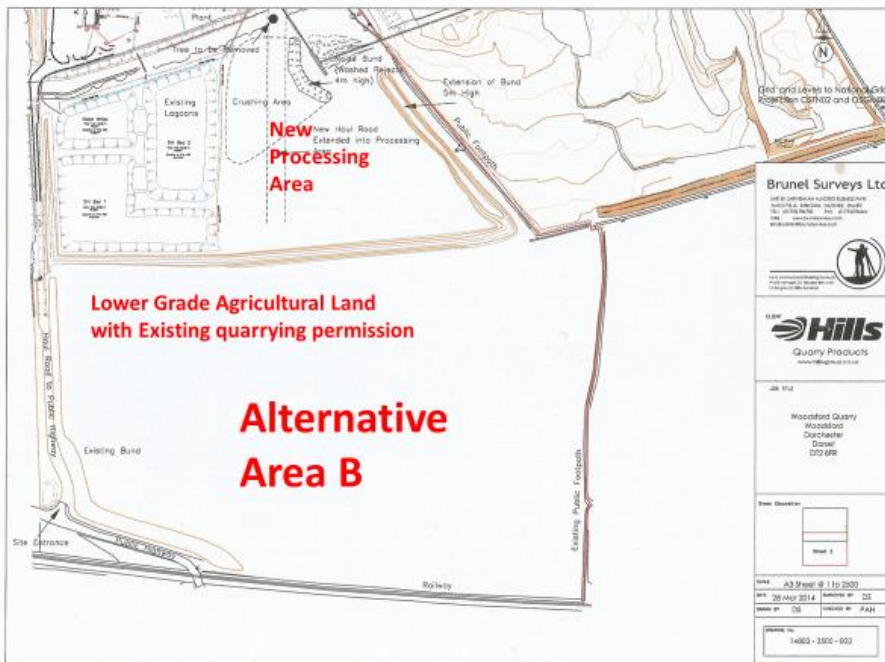
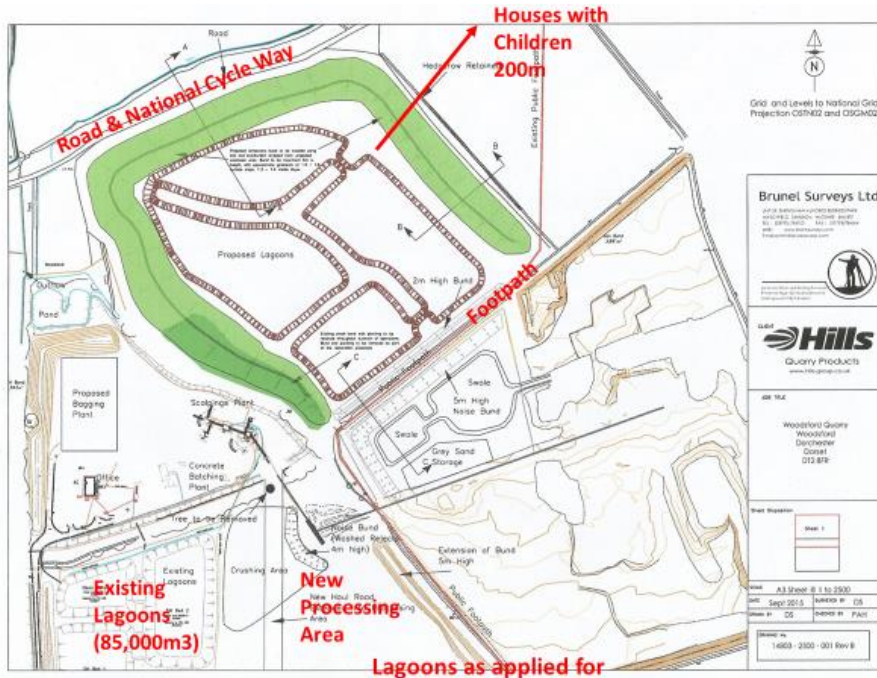
I wish to raise the following points:

- failure to make positive contribution to conservation of heritage significance;
- failure to seek appropriate information;
- insufficient professional consultation;
- failure to make all reasonable efforts to avoid harm;
- failure to assess cumulative effects;
- failure to consider financial safeguarding of Listed Building;
- failure to assess alternatives based on Planning criteria;
- failure to recognise submitted photographic evidence;
- failure to recognise acknowledged harm as significant environmental effect;
- artificially narrow approach to issue of setting;
- officer-imposed changes without assessment of effects;
- reliance upon prior Planning process of unlawful nature;
- recommendation of *ultra vires* condition;
- overall defective balancing exercise.

3. Statement from Tony Meader, Woodsford Parish Council, in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

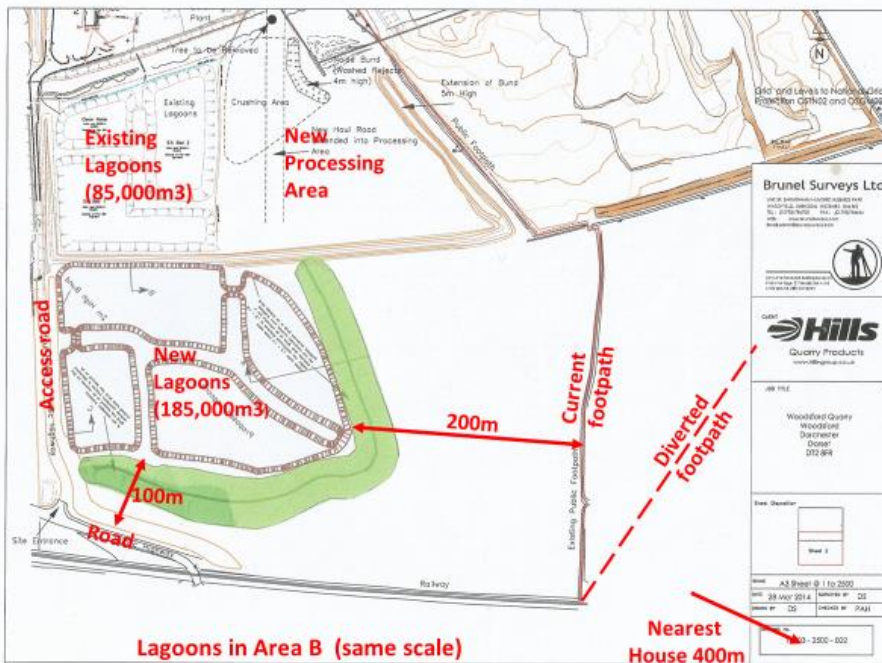
I would like to make a statement at the 1st March Regulatory Committee meeting covering;

- Public accessibility of silt lagoons in alternative area B.
- Silt lagoon sizing.
- Lack of restoration north of the conveyor.
- Noise

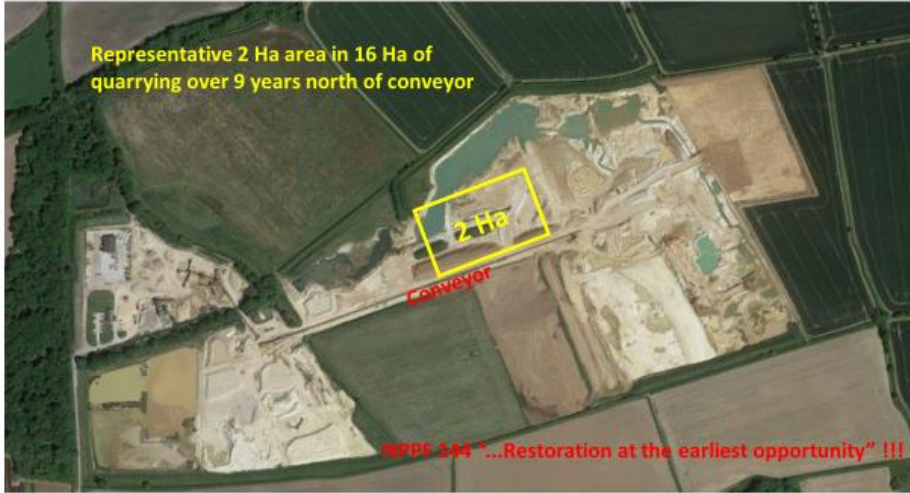




Lagoons in Area B (same scale)



Lagoons in Area B (same scale)



4. Statement from Jennifer Meader in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

I would like to make a statement on behalf of Curloads Consultants who have been assessing the noise impact of the Woodsford Quarry applications. It will cover;

- The correct setting of noise level conditions.
- Errors with the applicants assessment.

5. Statement from Nick Dunn, Applicant's Planning Agent, in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

As the Applicant's Planning Agent, I propose to discuss the following topics;

- Need for the development proposals;
- Justification for the size of the silt lagoons;
- Noise; and
- Heritage Impact Assessment & Review of Alternatives.

6. Statement from Nigel Hill, Resident of Moreton, in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

Good morning Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,  
My name is Nigel Hill and I live in Moreton.

I am objecting to the Hills Planning Application ending in 1057, and specifically the size of the silt lagoon required.

The Woodsford Castle issue has overshadowed the central point of this application: the need for more land for a silt lagoon. Hills have underestimated the land they require by 55%, which is a lot more land than they have applied for.

Hills have consistently failed to calculate the correct size of their proposed silt lagoon in each iteration of their planning application.

I have responded to DCC on each occasion, showing that they have made very simple arithmetic mistakes in their calculations. Using the figures and method of calculation supplied by Hills in their application, I have calculated that they have consistently underestimated by 55% the size of the lagoon they require.

The Report Originator has acknowledged on page 115 in paragraph 6.63 that Hills have made mistakes in their calculations.

In paragraph 6.63 the report refers to, I quote:

*..the complexities and uncertainties inherent in any such calculation....*

The calculation is not complex but very straightforward and the uncertainties do not account for a 55% underestimate. Hills have made amazingly simple mistakes in their calculations. In the interests of their ability to operate and satisfy aggregate demand, Hills need a lot more land for their silt lagoon than they have indicated in their planning application. Hills need to show DCC and this committee the land they would like to use to build the much larger silt lagoon that their own figures show they need, ...

and resubmit their planning application accordingly.

I recommend that you do not endorse this planning application.



7. Statement from Abby Bryant, Consultancy Director - Hills Quarry Products Ltd, in relation to Woodsford Farm, Woodsford, Dorchester

Wording inserted from a letter:

**Re: APPLICATION WD/D/15/001057 & 1/E/2005/0742/AuC WOODSFORD QUARRY**

My name is Abby Bryant and I am the Heritage Consultant who has been working with Hills Quarry Products Ltd. on the Woodsford Quarry application. I understand that Regulatory Committee are scheduled to meet on 1<sup>st</sup> March to consider the above applications. It is with regret that, due to a long-standing work commitment, I am unable to attend the meeting. Therefore, may I request that this letter is made available to the Members in advance of the meeting so that I can introduce myself and address a number of points to them?

Firstly, to explain what I do and how I became involved with this application. I have specialised in the assessment of change to the historic environment since 2004. Following on from a first-class degree in Archaeology and a Masters in Landscape Archaeology from Bristol University, my early career was spent with Wessex Archaeology as a founding member of the Consultancy team. Known by many people for its connections with television programmes such as Time Team, Wessex Archaeology is one of the largest archaeology and heritage practices in the country and has been for nearly 40 years; it is also an educational charity.

Specialising in large-scale developments such as road, rail, renewable energy and aggregates I have undertaken assessment work for a broad range of clients including Highways England, BAA, Bristol Port Authority and the former DECC (now the DBEIS). In 2011, I left Wessex Archaeology and subsequently started my own historic environment consultancy practice, which focussed on delivering heritage planning advice and assessments to the minerals and aggregates sector.

Returning to Wessex Archaeology in the summer of 2017, I am now the Consultancy Director and I lead team of 20 heritage consultants with a broad range of skills and experience that covers all aspects of the historic environment including archaeology, built heritage and setting.

I first became involved with the Woodsford Quarry application in May 2016, when I was asked by Hills to look at the possible impacts which constructing an additional silt lagoon on the northern edge of the quarry would have on the significance of Woodsford Castle. As you will all know, the significance of Listed Buildings can sometimes be affected by development that happens within their wider surroundings (or setting), and this is what my initial report focussed on. As a heritage professional, the way I undertook the assessment was informed by guidance published by Historic England and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (of which I am a member) and in line with the requirements of the NPPF.

It was clear from the outset that Woodsford Castle is an exceptional and unique building and the management of change within its surroundings, which include the active quarry, was of great importance. As with all my assessments I approached the work with clear head and dispassionate view, which considered only the facts as I found them. I visited the site and surroundings several times and visited Woodsford Castle and its ground with permission from the Landmark Trust.

By the very nature of this work, despite the use of a set of guiding principles that all heritage professionals should follow, these assessments can be subjective. Therefore, as is often the way with applications such as this, there were some further rounds of assessment undertaken to address comments made by Historic England as the statutory stakeholder, which included a contribution to an assessment of the impacts of some alternative locations for the proposed silt lagoon. Following intense scrutiny of my work by other interested parties, it was also peer reviewed.

The conclusion of my original assessment was that the addition of the silt lagoon would not lead to such a change in the physical environment (the setting) so as to further reduce the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the Castle. I therefore concluded that

the significance of the Castle would not receive additional harm. This view is based on a balanced and holistic judgement of the many and complex factors that inform our understanding of the significance of the building and its relationship with its surroundings and the scale and nature of the proposed development and its cumulative effect. I was also mindful of the fact that, despite the many years that the quarry will operate, it will eventually close and the planned restoration will reinstate an agrarian landscape to the south of the Castle, albeit not an exact replica of the historic farming landscape it replaces.

Ultimately, Historic England have stated that they believe the level of harm to the significance of Woodsford Castle arising from the new silt lagoon to be 'less than substantial'. As of their most recent letter (P0048967 dated 26 February 2018) their position remains that the Planning Authority should apply their statutory duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building and its setting. This exercise must be considered when applying the weighting of the various policy needs to reach a decision based on the evidence presented.

Please note that Historic England have at no point recommended that planning permission should not be granted.

Yours sincerely