

Statement to Dorset Council Cabinet Meeting 23 January 2023 Regarding Midgeham Farm Mineral extraction proposal

Alderholt has suffered for several years from the effects of the large vehicles transporting minerals from the existing quarry sites along this minor road which already use the only realistic route between Alderholt and Ringwood and access to the A31.

This minor road has a number of bottlenecks, caused mainly by the effects of these lorries breaking down the edge of the road (and which Hampshire Highways seem reluctant to repair). There have been a number of accidents along the road – some fatal – and several instances where cars have been damaged because of this.

The eastern end of the village as a whole will also suffer from unacceptable noise, dirt and disturbance for many years should this site become operational.

The draft plan itself points out that bringing this site into operation will have effects upon:

- Protection of the Dorset Heathland Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site, the Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar site and the River Avon SAC.
- The impact on the offsite foraging and breeding areas of the qualifying bird species of nearby SPA/Ramsar.
- The impact on Ringwood Forest and Home Wood Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.
- impacts upon populations of rare and notable species including Smooth Snake, Sand Lizard and Coral Necklace.
- Impacts on the amenity and users of the Moors Valley Country Park and other local residents.
- Issues regarding the maintenance and management of levels of permissive access and recreational use of the Moors Valley Country Park via the B3081.
- The amenity of Verwood and Alderholt residents, and local businesses.

Policy 13 within the draft plan emphasises that Mineral and Waste development should have a *safe and suitable access to the highway network*, and that consideration must be taken of the cumulative impacts from committed developments. As mentioned above there are significant issues already caused by existing mineral extraction sites along this road.

Including this site in the draft plan contravenes this important policy, and bringing such a site into operation without significant improvement in the road network by Hampshire County Council means that it would be unsustainable within the meaning of Paragraphs 8b and 8c of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). I strongly suspect that the cost of improving this minor road would also mean it becomes uneconomic and would thus also fail Para 8a of the NPPF.

I respectfully ask that Cabinet object to this unsustainable part of the Draft Plan.

Councillor David Tooke
Member for Cranborne and Alderholt Ward, Dorset Council