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Karen Turvey
Minerals Planning
Somerset County Council
County Hall
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21st November 2016

Dear Karen

PLANNING APPLICATION REF. 1/17/16/083 CALLOW ROCK QUARRY, SHIPHAM GORGE, BS27 3DQ. NORTHERN LATERAL EXTENSION TO THE EXISTING QUARRY, CONSOLIDATION AND REGULARISATION OF EXISTING OPERATIONS AND ASSOCIATED ANCILLARY DEVELOPMENT.

CPRE Somerset wishes to make the following comments on this application:

Landscape Impact: The existing quarry and proposed extension lie entirely within the Mendip Hills AONB. AONBs are nationally important landscapes which have "*the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty*" according to NPPF section 115.

Extending Callow Hill Quarry as proposed would inevitably impact on the appearance of the designated landscape. We accept that the existing quarry is well hidden from the surrounding countryside but the proposed extension involves removal of the top of the hill and could well have a more significant visual impact, particularly when viewing the Mendip ridge from afar - in fact the ridgeline is visible from many popular viewpoints well outside the AONB itself.

The proposed screening mounds and planting are designed to help to mitigate some of this visual impact but it is vital to ensure that such features are fully in context with the local topography and reflect the character and natural profile of the landscape. We would like to echo the concerns raised by the Mendip Hills AONB Unit about the visual impact on views from the south where screening would not be possible.

The Somerset Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England exists to promote the beauty, tranquility and diversity of rural England by encouraging the sustainable use of land and other natural resources in town and country.

Impact on Local Amenity & Tranquility: Somerset Minerals Policy DM8: MINERAL OPERATIONS AND THE PROTECTION OF LOCAL AMENITY states that *“the applicant must demonstrate: ‘a) that the proposed development will not generate unacceptable adverse impacts on local amenity:” It is also important to note that the NPPF also states (section 144) that it is the duty of the planning authority to “ensure that permitted operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, including from noise, dust, visual intrusion, traffic, tip- and quarry-slope stability, differential settlement of quarry backfill, mining subsidence, increased flood risk, impacts on the flow and quantity of surface and groundwater and migration of contamination from the site; and take into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;”*

Picking up on a couple of these key points:

Noise: By its nature, quarrying is a noisy activity. Extending the area to be quarried will increase the potential for noise intrusion within the AONB and will mean that the AONB and its communities will be subject to this loss of tranquillity for an additional 25 years on top of that allowed under the existing consent.

Traffic: Callow Rock Quarry currently generates considerable traffic movements as it has no rail link, unlike some larger quarries in East Mendip. We appreciate that the extension would not involve any increase of traffic movements or working hours. However, we are aware of concerns from residents of Cheddar that the existing road network is not suitable for the current level of quarry traffic. Cheddar is currently the subject of several major planning applications for large housing developments. Inevitably, these will lead to a significant increase in traffic in an area which already has an inadequate roads infrastructure and which is poorly served by public transport. CPRE is therefore very concerned about the impact of allowing significant quarry traffic movements on these roads for a further 25 years without any mitigation measures or road improvement schemes. If this proposal is granted permission, we would urge Somerset County Council to consider placing restrictions on the movement of traffic and the size of the vehicles used.

Should permission for the extension be granted this should be conditional on any dormant permissions being relinquished and an undertaking that no applications for further extensions will be made.

CPRE Somerset feels that unless our concerns can be addressed adequately during the application process, this proposal should be **refused**.

Yours sincerely



Becky Collier
Branch Manager - CPRE Somerset