

Cllr Tony Diccio



Dear Councillor Diccio,

Following on from our Parish Council meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020 where I asked whether you would be able to gather some information for us relating to the planning permissions in the wider area of Meriden Quarry please find below our questions and concerns.

Our first concern is around the Review of Mineral Planning Permission (ROMP). Area G of Meriden Quarry last had a ROMP in 1998 with the review of conditions, meant to happen every 15 years, postponed on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2012. This therefore leads us to believe that the site is operating on planning permission obtained 22 years ago and the conditions attached to the permission are no longer fit for purpose. The postponement is subject to review within 15 years, we believe it is only fit and proper that a review is now carried out prior to this date. Solihull MBC have the power to serve notice to do this as the local planning authority.

We would also like to request that under any review of conditions on operators/sites in the future include a similar planning S106 Agreement alike to the one attached from Staffordshire County Council. We understand this to be a standard obligation across all Staffordshire sites whereby operators are required to undertake local liaison. It would be good to see this replicated in Meriden as the well regarded QLG group has begun to unravel through nonattendance by operators and landowners. This is a particular shame as the group had been put forward and then longlisted for a national award for good practice.

We have been in frequent communication with Solihull MBC Planning around many issues at the quarry. In a letter sent by Meriden Parish Councils Resident Representative, dated 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 and attached for your reference, we have concerns that extraction is not incidental due to the fact that in a Design and Access Statement submitted by Aldermill on behalf of NRS in April 2018 refers to *“the original excavation (by Tarmac) removed only building sand, but now sand and gravel is being extracted at a deeper level”*. This therefore leads Meriden Parish Council to believe extraction is being undertaken for commercial purposes and is no longer incidental.

We would also like to express concern around the NRS operation on the former Tarmac site on Cornetts End Lane. With NRS now extracting at a much deeper level to that of the previous operator Tarmac we believe this calls into question the adequacy of original conditions imposed on the site. The reference for this permission is PL/2012/00471/FULM and would ask SMBC to review these conditions. We would like to see things such as limits to the depth and closeness to site boundaries etc included in new conditions to maintain the upmost safety for both employees on site and local residents.

Another concern is around the impact that quarry traffic has on the village. Area G has planning conditions stating *“provision for the imposition of an upper limit of a combined maximum of 250*

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vehicle movements to and from the site per day, including lorry movements to and from the materials recycling operations approved within Area G under planning application 2014/474.” This is also stated under the planning application 2014/476. We are concerned that there are significantly higher volumes of movements at the quarry than allowed under the conditions. In order to gain an insight to the true average movements on the site we would like to call on SMBC to request to see the weighbridge tickets over the last 3 years and share the results of their findings. This would either prove residents concerns to be true or on the other hand alleviate any concerns they have.

We would like to question whether the periodic monitoring regime which is referred to in the traffic management plan undertaken by ADC on behalf of NRS has ever been conducted. This document refers to “vi. Implementation of a periodic monitoring regime, where professional traffic consultants will carry out random spot check at various points along both the official and other possible routes leading to and from the ‘Area G’ quarry to determine whether or not all lorries and other vehicles visiting the quarry are adhering to the prescribed routes”.

Our final point is more general and surmises the problems and concerns we have listed above. We feel SMBC has poor mineral planning control within the Meriden Quarry Area. We know that other councils employ specialist trained mineral planning consultants to oversee the operations. We are also aware that up until 2012 SMBC held a contract with Warwickshire County Council to buy into such expertise. In documents derived from a SMBC Planning Committee Meeting SMBC said “in regard to Meriden Quarry. For many years regular six-monthly monitoring visits were undertaken on Solihull’s behalf by specialist minerals planning officers of Warwickshire County Council”. In response to our Resident Representatives enquiry as to whether this could be renewed, SMBC Planning stated “The Council has been self-sufficient in its role as minerals planning authority for a long time now, successfully dealing with all minerals-related applications and matters over that time, and I am not aware of any perceived need to review the position.” This is something we disagree on as the quarry is also now significantly larger and more complex with additional operators and therefore, we feel requires a higher level of expertise that is currently held within Solihull. and ask that you as our locally elected representative push to be reinstated to reinstate public confidence in the system.

I look forward to your response.

Best Wishes,



Cllr James Hughes  
Chair of Meriden Parish Council’s Planning Committee.