

Examination of the Mineral Site Plan

Site AS27 Horton Heath

The Verwood Town Council wishes to register a strong **OBJECTION** to the inclusion of this site situated at Horton Heath.

The site in question is close to the border of the Verwood Parish and is considered by the Town Council to potentially have a number of significant issues, which will impact on the wellbeing of our community. The details of the key areas of concern, in support of our objection, are set out below:

Impact on the C2:

The potential removal of up to 3.5 million tonnes of mineral will create up to 80 HGV movements on a typical day during the extended 12-17 year lifetime of the extraction period. The council considers that such an intensification of HGV movement will increase still further the traffic volume beyond the existing and anticipated increase resulting from the expansion of the Woolsbridge Industrial Estate on the C2. The plan for Woolsbridge includes a household waste transfer depot, which in itself will generate significant additional HGV traffic movements.

To the south and east, Highways England has commented that the site has the potential to impact on a number of A31 trunk road junctions including West Moors & Ashley Heath. Both these junctions can only be accessed through Three Legged Cross in our parish via the C2.

The C2 is narrow and has already suffered problems due to the compaction of its subsurface by HGVs. Ongoing remedial work was started last year and is continuing this year. The increase in HGV traffic will seriously impact the nature of this road which is already coping with traffic volumes above the road design limits.

There are a number of concealed entrances and accesses to residential property along the C2 in all directions leading from the site access.

Environment Impact to the immediate and surrounding area:

The permitted low volume mineral extraction at Redman's Quarry and the adjacent solar farm has already had a significant impact on the natural environment. The industrial scale of mineral extraction from site AS27 will have a significant impact on the intensification of land use and harm the peace and tranquillity at this prominent location.

With Verwood and Three Legged Cross only a short distance away, it is the only high area within easy walking distance for residents of our parish that offers such wonderful views. It offers exercise in the natural environment and resulting health benefits to our population of over 14,000.

The area of Horton Common includes SSSIs, SPAs, open access land and existing and potential ecological networks all of which are close to site AS27 and impose similar ecological and environmental constraints to those which render the nearby site AS08 unsuitable.

The town council also has concerns about the water table may be contaminated due to the extraction impacting on the hydrology. Local Farmers use water sources from wells in the vicinity of the extraction sites.

Rights of Way Considerations:

There is a potential and indeed real concern about the conflict between HGV traffic and horse riders/walkers using the rights of way adjacent to the site and its proposed access. HGV traffic will also have to cross some of these rights of way. The access route to the solar farm only provides a short distance separated from existing bridleways.