

Verwood Town Council response to Grundon Environment Scoping Document
Consultation for the Purple Haze site.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to accompany a planning application for the extraction of gravel and sand at the site known as 'Purple Haze' on the border of Verwood, Dorset.

Verwood Town Council endorses the detailed submissions by Dorset Council (DC), Friends of Ringwood Forest (FoRF) and the East Dorset Environment Partnership (EDEP). These thorough and thoughtful submissions set out clearly the environmental considerations that need to be considered in full as part of any future planning application.

The Council requires that further and more detailed consideration be given to any potential impact on the acid mire and Ebblake bog. This site is noted as an SSSI but it is also a Ramsar site of international significance and is part of the Dorset Heaths SPA and Dorset Heaths SAC.

Any EIA that accompanies a planning application must be able to demonstrate beyond doubt that this important site is protected, preserved and enhanced, including its hydrology, biodiversity and wildlife. This needs to be demonstrated at both the extraction and restoration stages and any mitigation measures which should be based on the Precautionary Principle.

Further and more explicit information is required to demonstrate how noise and dust from work on the site would be mitigated including how monitoring and compliance will be managed. This is required for both the residents of Verwood and also the impact of works on wildlife within and near to the site.

The Council requests more detailed information about how the water table level has been determined. The EIA must ensure that all hydrological assessments have been undertaken throughout the year to ensure that the water level is fully understood. This is especially important given the intentions for the majority of extraction to take place above the water table.

The EIA needs to set out clearly the impact of any proposed extraction under water level, especially on the southern section of the site.

Strong consideration is needed to the impact of any water used on site as part of the extraction process. This is required to ensure that no onsite activity upsets the PH level of the soil or groundwater of the acid mire.

The EIA needs to include the impact of increased traffic movements during construction and operation of the site. Particular consideration should be given to the junction known as 'Bakers Hanging' with a clear mitigation plan to ensure that any application improves this junction. The Bakers Hanging junction is a known accident black spot with a long history of RTC, some resulting in fatalities. Verwood Town Council notes and agrees with the comments from Dorset Council that the vehicle movement figures seem low and requires further explanation.

It is important that specific consideration is given to the impact of traffic movements on the town of Verwood. The current road network is limited and further information about how HGV movements will be managed is necessary.

Concerns have been raised about archaeological sites identified on the Hampshire HER. Verwood Town Council suggests that local archaeology societies be given permission to carry out excavations on the two sites. Further information about these concerns are included as Appendix 1.

Verwood Town Council would wish to join any management or community liaison group that is formed and suggest that this should be a required condition on any permission. The town of Verwood, whilst in Dorset rather than Hampshire, is sure to bear the brunt of construction and development of this site. As a result, it is fair that the Council is fully represented in any discussions about the ongoing management of the site.

The Council seeks further representation from Dorset based community and environmental groups including EDEP and FoRF.

Verwood Town Council is grateful for the opportunity to participate at this stage. Further consideration will be given to any future application.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Pat Morrow

Mayor of Verwood

Archaeology sites Appendix 1.

This site includes two monuments listed on the Hants HER, a small barrow (approx 1.5m high by 4m diameter) and A. N. Other identified from aerial photos but apparently not ground truthed

We are encouraged to note that in your announcement of this consultation, archaeology was the first subject listed as a potential concern to be addressed. However, reading the proposals I note that archaeology is only considered (under *Methods of Working*) at the soil removal phase (and it is not clear to me if this is the whole site, or just the processing site and phase 1 as it is not mentioned for any other phase). In either event this ignores the opportunity to properly excavate and record the scheduled barrow in phase 4 and the scheduled feature in phase 11 (if this feature exists - the Hampshire HER states only that it was identified from aerial photographs).

The expense of a professional excavation is understood, but there may be an alternative. There are several active local archaeology societies who would carry out an excavation on the barrow and ground truth the other feature and excavate if appropriate. On the basis that the alternative is total destruction with no recording of the sub surface aspects of the features (only recovery of finds) this would be at no cost other than limited funds for specialist analysis. Any excavation could be complete before extraction on that phase so would not delay the programme. These local societies have carried out work to a high standard and can provide testimonials from respected practitioners if required.