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Ms Felicity Hart
Spatial Planning and Economy Unit
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Hertford
SG13 8DN

Contact: Susie Defoe
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Your Ref: SLUP/CM0963/PL/0870/17
Our ref: 3/17/2352/CPO
Date: 20 October 2017

Dear Ms Hart

Application for the phased extraction of 1.25million tonnes of sand and gravel, mobile dry screening plan, weighbridge, wheel cleaning facilities, ancillary site offices, construction of new access onto Wadesmill Road, with phased restoration of landscaped farmland at a lower level on land.

Land adjacent to Rickneys Quarry, Wadesmill Rd, Chapmore End, Ware

Thank you for your letter, statement, reports, associated correspondence and detailed plans received on the 4 October 2017 in connection with the proposed development at the above mentioned site.

The Council's response is based upon the other considerations of the proposal as regards the provisions of relevant policies of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 and the national planning guidance of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Emerging Local Plan Pre-Submission Consultation 2016 (currently under Examination). It is acknowledged that the proposal would fall principally within the provisions of the Herts Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2002 -2016

It is noted that as in the previous County Council applications regarding this site, that the site falls within a Preferred Area for the extraction of aggregates in accordance with the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. East Herts Council with regard to the land which is in the Green Belt also acknowledges that the extraction of minerals/ aggregates constitutes appropriate development in Green Belt.

However, the proposed office buildings, bunds and associated equipment would adversely impact on the openness of the Green Belt and therefore would not constitute appropriate development (as per the County Council's previous refusal)



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

There is also concern as mentioned previously that the site is of an open aspect in an elevated position, publicly accessible and in the immediate surroundings of Hertford and links to Bengoe and other villages. This area is also less contained than other areas of Rickneys Quarry.

Once again there are neighbour representations raising concerns over the noise issues, general disturbance from the extraction, traffic concerns as to the number of lorry movements per day over the extended period of excavation, the impact on the Green Belt and the details of the future restoration period that should be detailed and defined now if permission is granted.

The proposal does show the area of the development somewhat detached from direct impact on the majority of concentrated residential development but close to The Wick a residential area on Sacombe Road, as well as directly adjacent to a row of residential cottages at the end of Vicarage Lane.

As requested previously although bunds may be used to mitigate for noise impact the County Council should assess the efficiency and efficaciousness of these bunds by way of an independent noise assessment, especially as the noise impact would be of a continual state, materially affecting the amenities of the local residents over the proposed years of the operation of the extraction, which can also in some cases be extended beyond the projected timescales predicted on the application details.

Considering the character of the site, it is considered that a more detailed investigation of mitigation measures for noise attenuation should be considered including proven additions of significant screen planting of mature trees to support the bunds, which would also improve the visual amenity of the area while in operation.

Standard conditions should also be attached as regards restricting the operating hours of the use, control of the lorry routes used expressly excluding other unsuitable routes to the site, and the number of lorry/ vehicle movements expected per /day/week.

The adverse impacts in relation to the existing landscape are likely to be significant, the site sits within the Rib Valley and as such is largely elevated above other land. The land to the east which slopes down to Wadesmill Road

and is a notably sensitive area, in which to consider such an invasive proposal as the detriment to the visually amenity of the existing area would be the most noticeable and damaging.

Restoration may be planned in a general terms, but it needs to be detailed now at the initiation point rather than being a generalised approach. There are sensitive elements of byways and footpaths that need to be considered in detail with other opportunities to extend the footpath network and introduce interpretation opportunities on the land for wildlife and public access.

This would support, as mentioned previous in the Council's consultation reports on this site, the opportunity to add mixed woodland planting, biodiversity enhancements and surface water management to introduce ponds etc.

These details so often get lost when the extraction lasts for 10 to 15 if not more years, so it is imperative to agree the details a head of time so the restoration programme and details are agreed now and not lost many years in the future. As some sites in the County bear witness to poor restoration after many years of extraction and uncontrolled infill, changing the topography and landscape character of the original land form.

On the basis therefore of the current proposal, East Herts Council objects in principle to the development and is not satisfied that the previous reasons for refusal have been addressed satisfactorily. It is therefore requested that the County Council takes the issues and concerns mentioned above into consideration in their determination of the application.

I trust the above comments are of assistance, and would appreciate if you would provide me with a copy of the County Council's decision in due course. If you have any further inquiries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely



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