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SENT BY EMAIL

Our Ref: [SMD/2014/0682/122 M MCA](#)

Your Ref [SMD/2014/0682](#)

17 July 2015

Dear Mr Lynch,

**SCHEME OF DELEGATION TO OFFICERS: CONSULTATION FROM STAFFORDSHIRE
MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL IN CONNECTION WITH AN OUTLINE PLANNING
APPLICATION TO THEM FOR LEISURE DEVELOPMENT AT MONEYSTONE QUARRY,
OAKAMoor**

I refer to your consultation letter dated 8 June 2015.

Background

Laver Resorts Limited is seeking planning permission for a leisure-led mixed use development on 51.8 hectares of land within the former Moneystone Quarry. The County Council as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority in a [letter dated 15 December 2014](#) raised no objection to the proposals subject to comments about the implications of the proposal for the areas of the former quarry remaining outwith the application site.

The application site excludes those areas of the quarry recently approved to be used as a solar farm in respect of which comments have previously been made by the County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority in respect of the resubmitted proposal (our ref. [SMD/2015/0220 MCA](#)). Other areas of the former quarry are outwith the application site and these areas remain subject to restoration and aftercare requirements associated with the mineral planning permission (our ref. [SM.96/935/122 M D4](#)).

Supplementary information and amended plans have been submitted. The amendments relate to:

- A revision to the alignment of the Blackley Lane access road;
- The reduction and reconfiguration of the lodges within the Black Plantation and south of the Lake in Quarry 3 to take into account the principles of a strategy for the positioning of lodges within these wooded areas; and,
- The addition of the relocated lodges from Black Plantation and from south of the Lake in Quarry 3 to elsewhere within Quarry 2.



Observations

No additional observations are made in terms of conformity with mineral safeguarding or waste planning policies. The County Council's additional comments are focussed, therefore, on the implications of the proposal in relation to those parts of the former quarry that remain outwith the application site. As stated in our previous letter, it is important that the leisure development proposals are satisfactorily integrated with those parts of the site that remain subject to the requirements of the approved quarry restoration scheme.

The proposed changes to the layout of the lodges and access to the Blakely Lane do not significantly affect the comments that have already been made on the implementation of the approved minerals restoration scheme outwith the application site.

The proposed Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP) is welcomed and should assist in legal and policy compliance, providing the Plan is comprehensive and appropriate, covering all habitat and protected and priority species likely to be affected and in place prior to commencement or site clearance. A condition for approval of a CEcMP, that is in accordance with the Outline CEcMP prior to commencement or site clearance, and will be implemented throughout the site clearance and construction period, is recommended.

The proposed Outline Habitat Management Plan provides for habitat management for both the leisure scheme and solar farm. For effective regulation of the implementation of habitat creation proposals, it is recommended that the Management Plan includes those areas that are outwith the application area and also subject to the restoration and aftercare requirements of the mineral permission. The applicant should clarify the extent of the area to be covered by the Management Plan, refer to the approved restoration and aftercare scheme for the quarry and provide for a comprehensive Management Plan that can be regulated by your Authority in consultation with the Mineral Planning Authority.

To assist in your assessment of the implications of the proposals on the biodiversity resource of the area, an appendix to this letter provides advisory comments from the County Council's Principal Ecologist on matters of detail. In addition, contrary to statements in the "Consultee Response Statement", it should be recognised that there remain outstanding restoration works to be completed in accordance with the approved restoration and aftercare scheme for the quarry and the progress of these works continues to be monitored by the County Council's Regulation Team.

Conclusions

Having regard to the relevant policies contained in our [adopted and emerging Minerals Local Plan](#), the [Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy](#) (and supported by the [Churnet Valley Masterplan](#)), it is reasonable to conclude that the amendments to the proposals could be satisfactorily integrated with those parts of the site that remain subject to the requirements of the approved quarry restoration scheme if the above recommendations are followed.

Therefore, in accordance with the powers contained in the 'Scheme of Delegation to Officers', this letter confirms that Staffordshire County Council, in its role as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, has **NO OBJECTION** to the amended proposals, subject to the above recommendations concerning the Construction Ecological Management Plan and the Outline Habitat Management Plan.



I trust that Staffordshire County Council's observations and recommendations will be taken into account in reaching a decision on the application.

Yours sincerely

Matthew Griffin

Team Leader – Minerals Planning Policy

Copy to Ali Glaisher, Principal Ecologist

Please note that a copy of this letter will be published on the internet via the County Council's on-line Applications Register.

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Appendix: Advisory comments on the biodiversity implications of the proposed amendments provided by the County Council's Principal Ecologist (ref: SMD/2014/0682/122 M)

Amendments to Blakely Lane access

Impacts of Blackley Lane access realignment on landscape and ecology do not appear to have been assessed.

Appendix C Outline Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP)

Compliance with BS42020:2013 is welcomed. There are one or two oddities in the outline CEcMP that require addressing. s.2.1 Risk Assessment refers to marine works but fails to refer to various operations that will be covered by this consent including earth moving, construction, landscaping. s.8.2 states that the Site Manager will develop and review the CEcMP, ensure site operatives have appropriate training, review and improve method statements for ecological aspects, monitor construction activities to ensure control methods are effective. It should be made clear that these activities should be in conjunction with the ECoW/project ecologist and that any departures from the approved CEcMP will need consent.

Appendix D Outline Habitat Management Plan

The detailed Habitat Management Plan should include a Work Programme identifying when works are programmed to take place.

2. Grassland Habitats

Grassland areas B appear in two sections with different prescriptions, regarding proposals -2.5-2.7- and 2.8-2.9.

s.2.7 refers to creation of species-rich grassland using green hay from appropriate donor sites. It is recommended that this be amended to add reference to harvested seed in addition to green hay, giving more flexibility in timing of works and increased chance of success. Interim results of trials at Cauldon Quarry indicate that a mix of green hay and locally harvested seed applied together gives the best results. Use of harvested seed also allows later flowering species that do not establish from green hay to be catered for through seed collection.

s.2.9 It is far from clear that the measures proposed will result in development of species-rich grassland. A timescale needs to be specified for monitoring after which intervention such as harrowing and over-seeding will be employed. Five years might be an appropriate timescale with the s.9.5 and Appendix 3 criteria utilised to measure success.

3. Woodland Habitats

s.3.5 – 3.7 – Information is required on how the ancient woodland areas and buffer zones will be identified and marked out on the ground to ensure that site managers act in accordance with the Habitat Management Plan.

For W4 – the approved restoration plan indicates that this area has, at least on quarry slopes, a heathy ground flora and includes thinning of pine and birch to open up these areas. This should be included in the plan with an action to map areas of woodland with a heathland species ground flora and to remove trees from these areas.



4. Heathland Habitats

It should be noted that H3 is part of solar farm mitigation, meaning that provision for heathland habitats through this proposal is not commensurate with that provided in the approved restoration plan ([SM.96/935/122 M D4](#)). Further provision for heathland is required. The hydra-seeded habitats should be examined for potential for conversion to heathland.

7. Other habitats, mosaics, bare ground

The approved restoration plan (SM. 96/935/122 M D4) includes provision, in Quarry 3, for bare faces for sand martin nesting and invertebrate habitat. This needs to be specified in this Outline Habitat Management Plan.

