

West Deeping Parish Council
c/o 11 The Lane,
West Deeping,
Lincolnshire,
PE6 9HS

Date: 30th October 2023

Subject: West Deeping

Dear Mr Fuller,

Thank you for your letter, dated 25th September 2023 which I received on the 16th October.

I am glad to hear you have had what sounds like a busy and successful summer at Molecey Mill & The Granary. I am also very pleased to hear you managed to attend our archaeological outreach session on the 12th September and joined our Liaison Meeting on the 5th October.

Restoration

I note your concerns reference our restoration progress and point you to the approved working scheme which I have attached to the covering email. I can print and post this if that would be useful. I hope you can see that the area directly opposite Molecey Mill is still being worked and restored in accordance with the approved scheme. The clay that sits beneath the sand and gravel in this area is used in the restoration of the whole site to raise the ground levels up to allow the creation of low level agriculture. This area will be worked until the restoration of the whole site is complete. Once we have finished extracting clay we are then able to allow the water level to raise to form the lake and restore the remaining slopes around the edge. Gary, our Quarry Manager suggests that he has been able to bring some restoration works in this area forward and will just require some planting in the new year.

Due Process

As stated in my letter dated 1st August 2023, *“the Mineral Local Plan (MLP) process is a lengthy, and thorough process to fully assess any potential mineral sites put forward to the relevant Councils, in this case Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).*

The current MLP Site Locations document was adopted in December 2017 following extensive assessments, public consultation and, finally, scrutiny from the Planning Inspectorate. The current plan covers the period up to 2031.

LCC are required to update the MLP at 5 yearly intervals and as you are aware this process of updating has commenced. The first stage of public consultation is not expected to commence until the spring of 2024.



During the Call for Sites process in 2022, Breedon submitted high level details for a further potential allocation, SG11, on the understanding that MS29 was already an allocated site. Given that the updated MLP will cover the period up to 2040, this was an opportunity for operators to highlight the mineral strategy for that period and to gain the thoughts of the authority on whether SG11 was a viable option or not. This would allow Breedon to plan for the future. Presently, there is no certainty that SG11 will reach allocated status.”

After extensive discussions with the Planning Officers managing the MLP update, Breedon agreed to re-submit MS29 with the inclusion of the processing plant (SG17). It was suggested that we may like to submit both SG11 and SG17 as one site, but after careful consideration we chose to submit separately. Our thinking behind this was around the practical process of operation, we have no intention of extracting mineral from both sites at the same time and wanted to be able to deal with them by way of separate planning applications within the updated plan period.”

The existing West Deeping quarry is currently estimated to have 440,000 tonnes of reserve remaining (as of the end of this month). Presuming our annual output of 330,000 tonnes is maintained this equates to 15 months' worth of production. As you are aware, we submitted a planning application in December 2022 (PL/0129/22) to secure an additional 196,000 tonnes of mineral (or just over 7 months of production) by reducing the standoffs between the current limit of extraction and properties adjoining the quarry. Just over 10 months on and this application is still awaiting determination following a member site visit in October.

From submission to determination, we expect an application for a southern extension would take around 18-24 months. Therefore the soonest we could expect a decision would be Summer 2025. In order to give ourselves the best chance of ensuring there is no break in operations (due to lack of sand & gravel) we have commenced the process of preparing our application for the southern extension with a view to submit this as soon as possible. This is expected to be finalised and ready to submit in early 2024. As the MLPs consultation process can often take considerable time before a final version is adopted, delaying our application for this process to conclude runs an almost inevitable risk of an outage of saleable material which may lead to the sites closure and job losses.

Working Group

I am grateful again to hear you are interested in joining a working group and I assure you there is a genuine appetite to work through the process together. I also believe we will be able to answer more of your queries during these sessions as and when the detail is known. I understand that Maria Cotton has made contact with you following the last liaison meeting to arrange dates for the working group sessions and she awaits your confirmation of suitable dates. I will endeavor to attend these sessions where possible.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Burgess

Regional Land and Mineral Resources Manager – Wales and South
07711 192 153