

REGULATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Regulation Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton, on Thursday 3 November 2022 at 2.00 pm

Present: Cllr T Lock (Chair), Cllr S Coles (Vice-Chair), Cllr B Bolt, Cllr M Caswell, Cllr M Dunk (attended virtually), Cllr T Grimes, Cllr E Hobbs, Cllr H Hobhouse (substitute), Cllr M Martin, Cllr M Murphy, Cllr A Soughton and Cllr M Wale

Other Members present: Cllr M Lewis

Other members present virtually: Cllr A Kendall*, Cllr N Clark, Cllr S Dyke and Cllr S Collins
(*Reserve Committee member)

Apologies for absence: Cllr J Baker (substituted by Cllr H Hobhouse) and Cllr K Pearce

1 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

The following declarations of interest were made at the meeting: -

- (a) Cllr A Soughton – application 851M (agenda item 7 refers) – knows landowners who submitted a late submission – withdrew;
- (b) Councillors M Caswell, T Lock, A Soughton and S Coles – application SCC/3940/2022 (agenda item 8 refers) – had received email communications from objectors, which had not opened;
- (c) Cllr Hobhouse – application SCC/3940/2022 (agenda item 8 refers) - knows applicant – withdrew.

2 Accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2022 - Agenda Item 3

The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 September 2022 were accepted as accurate.

3 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

3 members of the public and 2 applicant/agents registered to speak by the deadline and their statements / questions were considered as a part of agenda item 8, Application No SCC/3940/2022.

4 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 53 Schedule 14 Applications relating to Queen Camel and Sparkford, South Somerset - Applications 858M (northern section, A - C) and 859M - Agenda Item 5

Committee members had undertaken a site visit ahead of the meeting.

1. The Committee considered the Report by the Rights of Way Officer, concerning the applications from South Somerset Bridleways Association to upgrade parts of footpaths WN 23/40, WN 23/38 and WN 23/12 to bridleways and add sections of bridleway, from Babcary Road to the A303, Queen Camel, in the parish of Queen Camel, South Somerset - Applications 858M (northern section, A-C) and 859M.
2. The Rights of Way officer outlined the application by reference to the Report, supporting papers and the use of maps, plans and photographs and the report and the presentation covered – the application, supporting evidence, descriptions of the routes, relevant legislation, documentary evidence, evidence from landowners, consultations and other submissions, discussions of the documentary evidence, and summary, conclusions and recommendations.
3. The comments submitted by Ms Sarah Bucks, South Somerset Bridleways Association (supporter) were noted by the Committee.
4. The Local Division members, Councillor M Lewis and Councillor H Hobhouse addressed the Committee and queried aspects of the application, evidence presented and whether the application had been correctly processed.
5. On the basis of the information presented and the comments made the Committee decided by majority that the item be **DEFERRED** to seek reassurance that the full application process has taken place.

5 **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 53 Schedule 14 Applications relating to Queen Camel and Sparkford, South Somerset - Application 858M (southern section)** - Agenda Item 6

Committee members had undertaken a site visit ahead of the meeting.

1. The Committee received a Report by the Rights of Way officer, concerning the application from the South Somerset Bridleways Association to add a bridleway, from WN 23/38 to High Street, Sparkford, South Somerset – Application 858M (southern section).
2. The application is closely related to application 858M (northern section A – C) and 859M and the Committee agreed that the item be **DEFERRED**.

6 **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Section 53 Schedule 14 Applications relating to Queen Camel and Sparkford, South Somerset - Application 851M** - Agenda Item 7

Committee members had undertaken a site visit ahead of the meeting.

1. The Committee received a Report by the Rights of Way officer, concerning the application from the South Somerset Bridleways Association to upgrade footpath WN 27/4 and part of footpath WN 23/11 to bridleways from the A303 Queen Camel to Sparkford Hill, Sparkford, South Somerset – Application 851M.
2. The Committee had received a late paper submission from Mr and Mrs Hodder (objectors) which was circulated on 1 November 2022.
3. The application is closely related to applications 858M (northern section A – C) and 859M and to 858M (southern section), and the Committee agreed that the item be **DEFERRED**.

7 **Application for variation in planning condition at Blackford Hill Quarry, Blackford Hill, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7EA (SCC/3940/2022) - Agenda Item 8**

Committee members had undertaken a site visit ahead of the meeting.

1. The Committee considered the report of the Service Manager – Planning & Development on this application. The application was submitted by Somerset Stone Supplies and requested variation of planning condition 2 (planning permission reference SCC/3777/2020) that limits lorry movements from Blackford Quarry, Blackford Hill, Yeovil, Somerset BA22 7EA (application SCC/3940/2022).

2. The Planning Officer, with reference to the report, presentation, and the use of maps, plans, and photographs, outlined the application which proposes to increase the number and vary the type of vehicles used to haul stone from the site to the processing facility at Tout Quarry. The main issues for consideration are – planning policy, the impact on highways and traffic, the impact on living conditions of neighbours, environmental impact and matters raised in response to publicity and included a summary, conclusions and recommendations which were set out in full in paragraphs 9 and 10 on Pages 369 – 379 of the submitted report.

3. The Committee had received written submissions and heard from the following, with their comments / views summarised as shown below:

Ian Tibbitt – objector – application is flawed; photographs only recently posted on website and had submitted comments before this received; tractor limit untrue; failure to analyse extraction data; exceeded limits by 65% or more, what confidence have in numbers presented; not all stone removed from site has gone to the processing site.

Roger Martin – objector – inappropriate transport options, all options will increase scale of the operation and the amount of stone extracted; unacceptable huge increase in vehicle movements; increased hazards and road safety risks; disingenuous application based on misinformation; not technically credible.

Sylvia Hartnell-Beavis – objector – unsuitability of the Haul Road and access / no run off to the A303; visibility at the site access is sub-standard and potentially dangerous; increased loading on the causeway; Blackford is a conservation village; additional or heavier vehicles are not feasible or workable propositions.

Zac England – applicant – Somerset Stone Supplies – explained why application made and want to achieve permitted output limit.

Nick Dunn – Agent – Land & Mineral Management - has been highways assessment of proposals and does not consider up to 8 vehicle movements in a week to be onerous in highway terms, are compliant with planning policy; no justifiable material reason why planning permission should not be granted.

5.The Chair advised that a late submission had been received from Jane Monk, Chair Blackford & Compton Pouncefoot Parish (objector), circulated on 1 November 2022 and a further late submission had been received from Sarah Martin, Blackford Quarry Action Group (objector), circulated on 2 November 2022. These had been circulated to the Committee ahead of the meeting.

6.The Local Division member Cllr N Clark addressed the Committee and raised the following matters – constraints of roads around site and length of causeway; risk of damage to road if used by more larger vehicles; issues re A303 north of site and the junction; consider reality of impact of additional movements; in conservation area.

6.The Local Division member, Councillor S Dyke addressed the Committee and raised the following matters – strength of feeling from residents on issue, pleased that members did site visit – important aspect; mentioned Bill currently going through parliament; size of hauling tractor and trailer – received pictures quite late from applicant – make clear they are not ordinary sized vehicles but industrial vehicles which are inappropriate to go down narrow county lanes; figures presented do not stack up and need independent verification of figures; the characteristics of stone from the quarry were known about; this application will be over industrialisation of rural community; if minded to approve – ask to approve in principle pending independent verification of need.

7.The Planning Officer responded to the points raised – transport assessment was submitted with the application and was independently assessed, raised no objection, referred to NPF 11 and no grounds to base highways objections to and comments are set out in the report.

8. The Committee proceeded to debate the matter during which members raised matters including: the need for warning signs near quarry entrance and ahead of site; clarification on weight limit of vehicles; need assurances that keeping to agreed traffic movements and vehicles used; clarification that any or all options to be used, within annual limit with maximum of 8 HGVs per week.

8. Cllr T Grimes, seconded by Cllr M Caswell, moved the recommendation in paragraph 9 of the submitted report, that planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

9. Accordingly the Committee RESOLVED: -

1. To agree to variation of planning condition 2 (planning permission reference SCC/3777/2020), subject to the conditions set out in section 9 of the submitted report, and as amended below: -
 - (a) Delete informative 7 (reason – this informative is not relevant to application);
 - (b) Add condition to limit the number of load movements and the gross vehicle weight of the trucks, to provide clarity in terms of the size and weight of vehicles permitted to use the site;
 - (c) Add condition for the applicant to provide details and plan showing proposed location of signs near to the Quarry entrance and road, in the interest of road safety, to be implemented within 6 months once details are agreed.
2. That authority to undertake any minor non-material editing which may be necessary to the wording of those conditions be delegated to the Service Manager – Planning and Development, Enforcement and Compliance.

8 **Any Other Business of Urgency** - Agenda Item 9

There were no additional items of business raised at the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 4.30 pm)

CHAIR