

**Regulation Committee - Thursday 16 March 2023 (14.00)**  
**Public Speakers etc**

**Item 5 – application - Demolition of Torr Blockworks and lateral extension of quarry on land at Torr Works (SCC/4002/202)**

**Objectors:** None

**Supporters:**

**Applicant / Agent:**

**Chris Herbert, Planning Manager South, Aggregate Industries UK Limited**

Good afternoon and thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the committee.

Mineral extraction is coming to an end within the Leighton extension area at Torr Works quarry and is expected to be completed by the end of 2023. The ability to balance overall production at the quarry between the Leighton and main pit extraction areas is an important aspect of the operation at Torr as it allows flexibility to deal with quarry development and maintenance by having access to two production areas.

This planning application will provide a replacement extraction area to come on stream once the Leighton extension has been worked out.

The extension, which is wholly located within the existing Torr Works quarry operational boundary, will release approximately 11 million tonnes and will be worked over a 10 year period, so it will be completed prior to the 2040 end date of the existing planning permission already granted at Torr. There would be no change to the existing water management, traffic, noise, blasting and dust controls at the quarry as all existing limits, monitoring and control measures would continue to apply unchanged to the extension area.

This application is therefore important for helping to safeguard the jobs of the 97 direct employees and up to 50 contractors who work at Torr and for maintaining local and national minerals supply.

It is also important because it demonstrates that this can be done without having an adverse impact on local communities and the environment. This is reflected in us only receiving one letter of objection from the local community and no objections from statutory consultees.

From the start of this project, we have engaged with Natural England and Somerset Wildlife Trust to ensure that an agreed programme of ecological enhancements will be in place, delivering over 2 hectares of new tree planting and a purpose built bat house.

In addition, we have listened to the local community and are providing improvements to the bridleway so that walkers and riders will no longer have to cross the haul road within the quarry.

We believe this application is:

- Good for the environment with a comprehensive package of ecological enhancements;
- Good for the quarry and the investment and jobs that it supports; and
- Good for the local community by delivering mineral extraction that does not adversely impact on their amenities and delivers improvements to the rights of way network.

I would therefore ask you to support your officers' recommendation, but I would ask that members consider whether there is a need for the legal agreement to include water monitoring as currently proposed on page 20 of the report as this matter is already controlled by the existing legal agreement for the site and the EA have confirmed that no additional monitoring beyond what is already in place is required for this extension.

## **Statement from Cllr Philip Ham and Barry Clarke, Mendip Central and East**

Due to being unable to attend the meeting can the following statement be read out on our behalf: -

We have both been involved with this application through the Torr Quarry Liaison meetings and the Consultation process. This Application is covered by many of the conditions that the operators already adhere to at this site.

This Quarry is one of two that have rail heads in Somerset with access to the main line national rail network, thus avoiding a lot of HGV road movements.

Approval of this application will allow production of aggregates until 2040 providing work for the workforce and associated businesses for the next 17 years. We also note that the Bridleway/footpath network will be safer for its users as the haul road will not need to be crossed.

With no or little objection and consultations having taken place we fully support this application and agree with the planning officer for you to APPROVE this application.

Cllr Philip Ham and Cllr Barry Clarke