

**Chipping Sodbury Quarry
Community Liaison Group Meeting
1st February 2024
Meeting Room at Chipping Sodbury quarry**

DRAFT MINUTES

ATTENDEES:

John Ford (JF)	Yate Town Council
Julie Reed (JR)	Yate Rocks residents' representative
Louise Buckle (LB)	Yate Rocks residents' representative
Karen Hayes (KH)	South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) Public Rights of Way (PROW)
Mike Brown (MB)	Heidelberg Materials UK, Southwest Area Operations Manager
Joe Edwards (JE)	Heidelberg Materials UK, Chipping Sodbury Quarry Unit Manager
Andy Duncan (AD)	Heidelberg Materials UK Principal Landscape Manager (standing in for Alexandra Hemming)
Trystan Mabbitt (TM)	Heidelberg Materials UK Consenting & Development Manager
Samantha Stagg (SS)	James Reed PR
Michelle Beasley (MMB)	Heidelberg Materials UK secretariat

APOLOGIES AND MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rob Sims (RS)	Barnhill residents' representative
Neil Higgs (NH)	SGC Environmental Health Officer (EHO)
Richard Ashton (RA)	SGC Community Spaces Improvements Team Manager
Gareth Fielding (GF)	Wickwar Parish Council
Fergal Cummins (FC)	Chipping Sodbury Town Council
Ben Nutland (BN)	SGC Councillor for Yate North ward
John Davis (JD)	SGC Councillor for Yate Central ward
Adrian Rush (AR)	SGC Councillor for Chipping Sodbury and Cotswold Edge ward
Emma Warlock (EW)	The Friends of Ridge Wood
Sarah Sinstead (SS)	Autumn Brook Management Company

Agenda

- 1. Welcome and introduction – Interim Chair Mike Brown (MB)**
 - Review of minutes from the last meeting
 - Matters arising from the last minutes
 - Review of aims and membership of the group
- 2. Chipping Sodbury Operational Update – Joe Edwards (JE)**
 - Operations and logistics (incl. blasting)
 - Feedback
 - Traffic Management
 - Community Support
- 3. Environmental, landscape and biodiversity update – Andy Duncan (AD)**
- 4. Land and Mineral Planning update – Trystan Mabbitt (TM)**
- 5. Community Update – Joe Edwards (JE)**
- 6. AOBs**
- 7. Date for future meetings**

MEETING MINUTES

1. **Welcome and Chair introduction – Mike Brown (MB)**
 - **MB introduced himself and welcomed attendees to the meeting.**
 - **Attendees introduced themselves and set out which organisations/groups they were representing.**
 - **MB advised the purpose of these meetings is to form a dialogue with local stakeholders' representatives. Engaging and interacting with the community is a key Heidelberg Materials policy and the company is keen to hear from its 'critical friends'.**
 - **Based on best practice implemented at other Heidelberg Materials UK quarries, the new look group for Chipping Sodbury will have an expanded membership and operate on agreed Terms of Reference.**
 - **MB set out that it is Heidelberg Materials objective in the medium term to have a Chair appointed from the membership of the Group.**
 - **MB said Heidelberg Materials UK was committed to playing a positive part in the communities in which it operates. Operations at The Ridge now include a large business centre with 300 employees.**
 - **MB explained that the "draft" minutes from the previous meeting had been distributed to all members of the group as well as being uploaded to the Chipping Sodbury Quarry community page. At this subsequent meeting, the group will be asked if they agree with the content, and if so, "approved minutes" will then be sent to all members and uploaded to the community web page, with amends if any are agreed.**
 - **MB asked if the group was happy with the content of the draft minutes from the previous meeting.**
 - **JR said there was only one amendment, which was the last section of the welcome suggested Lidden Garden Village Residents Association as a representative, but this should say "Autumn Brook Residents Association".**
 - **MMB will update and send out "approved minutes".**
 - **MB went through the actions from the last meeting.**
 - **SS to invite Ladden Garden Village Residents Association representative to next meeting. **Completed****

- SS to ensure Agreed Terms of Reference to be circulated with the minutes and added to the Chipping Sodbury quarry community website page. **Completed**
 - MB/JE to arrange a presentation by blasting specialists at a future meeting highlighting key aspects of blasting for non-specialists. **Completed**
 - JE to share forthcoming blasting area details at future meetings. **Now in main agenda.**
 - TM to write to Yate Rocks residents confirming the proposed hours of operation for Brinsham West. **Update in main agenda.**
 - MB to follow up with the site manager at The Ridge re vehicle speeding. **Completed**
 - JE to review fencing and signage at Barn Hill. **Still to do – Confusion over who owns the fence, the council or the developer. JF to check and advise MB.**
- JF asked if the sign next to the church yard that says “Danger Quarry” belongs to Heidelberg Materials. JE to find out.
 - MB explained the recent rebranding to Heidelberg Materials UK wouldn’t mean there would be any changes to the running of the business. Heidelberg Cement has owned Hanson for 17 years and is now a multi-product company. He said the rebranding would be done gradually.
 - MB went through the group aims and terms of reference being:
 - To provide an information exchange between Heidelberg Materials UK and the local communities.
 - To facilitate communication, share information and engage in balanced discussions.
 - To provide residents and interested groups with an opportunity to discuss matters arising from site operations and future proposals.
 - Seek an independent Chair from its membership by the autumn.
 - Heidelberg Materials UK to provide secretariat support.
 - Terms of reference circulated and to be agreed by the membership of the group.
 - MB said the group was formed to promote open discussions and to develop opportunities to work together.
 - MB asked the liaison group if everyone could think of anyone else who should be invited to the liaison meeting.
2. Chipping Sodbury Quarry Operational Update – Joe Edwards (JR)
- JE advised the group of production volumes in 2023 and the planned volumes for 2024.

- **JE said of work intended this year, level 4 in Brinsham East and level 7 in Hampstead Farm would be opened. Focusing on generating increased volume of clean stone and reducing volumes of bulk fills produced.**
- **JE said Barnhill would be clear by June to prevent the need for operational access.**
- **JE said he would continue improvements on operational efficiencies and will continue to make contacts and engage with local stakeholders.**

Blasting

- **JE advised there had been 2 blasts this year to date which has provide 118kt of material. Both blasts were at Brinsham East)**
- **LB said she was not getting notified of blasts.**
- **JE said he could possibly call or text when blasts are due. It can't be done too far in advance as even right up to a couple of hours before blasting they can be cancelled. For example, rain prevented the last planned blast. He said he would see what he can do to make contact more efficient.**
- **JE said the Maximum Instantaneous Charge (MIC) was 205kg. The maximum Air over Pressure (AOP) was 127db and the highest recorded vibration (measured as Peak Particle Velocity) was 4.77mm/s PPV.**
- **MB said it's Air Over Pressure that rattles windows, and not the vibration.**

Traffic management

- **JE advised site access had been changed to allow HGV traffic to enter site via Wickwar Road, reducing traffic around Southfields Way.**



- JE said he had spoken to the council about the carriage way being in a bad state of repair. He will raise it again.
- KH suggested speaking with Highways Management.
- JR said a burst water main had also caused issues.
- SS said there were a couple of places these issues can be reported. One is “Fix my street” and the other South Gloucestershire Council. See web links. <https://www.fixmystreet.com/reports/South+Gloucestershire?zoom=16&lat=51.55396&lo> & <https://beta.southglos.gov.uk/report-a-pothole-damaged-road-footpath-or-cycleway/>.
- JE said regarding Brinsham Stream, work had started on pumps. He said the parts had all arrived and just had to be wired up to a live telematic system in the stream. Heidelberg Materials UK are working with BCL Hydrology on the telematic alarm.
- JE said live tracking of Brinsham stream was now in place.
- JE showed data graphs on the flow of Brinsham stream, he said to the right of the graph shows the last 7 years of flow from the Brinsham stream. Since October 2022 we have pumped more water down the Ladden Brook than previously.
- JE said the graph shows it would regularly dry up. The stream is dependent on Chipping Sodbury Quarry to keep it flowing, with the pump kicking in when its needed.

Community

- **JE said £500 had been raised for the local food bank with the Movember appeal the staff at the quarry took part in. £410 of it was spent on gifts for the toy bank and £90 donated to the local food bank.**
 - **JE advised the group the Chipping Sodbury Quarry was hosting its first school visit. He said pupils from Abbotswood Primary School would be visiting in February and St Pauls Primary School had been in touch.**
 - **MB said recruiting new talent can be a challenge in this industry. The average age of applicants is 48. By engaging with local schools, it is the hope that we can highlight the roles available to young people, helping to create a more diverse work force.**
 - **LB asked what Heidelberg Materials UK offer school leavers.**
 - **SS said Heidelberg Materials UK have both LEAD apprentice and graduate schemes. See <https://www.careers.heidelbergmaterials.co.uk/en>**
 - **MB said Heidelberg Materials UK attend careers fairs at schools and offer work experience. He said there are three areas for the apprenticeship scheme. Mobile plant, Maintenance and Technical. The higher apprenticeship is 3 years and graduates 2 years. Heidelberg Materials UK also offer sponsorship to do BA Honours degree.**
3. **Environmental, landscape and biodiversity update – Andy Duncan (AD)**
- **AD advised “green corridors” had now been planted with 2,600 native trees, including; Field Maple, Alder, Birch, Dogwood, Hazel, Hawthorn, Spindle, Oak, Cherry, Blackthorn, Dogrose and Guelder Road.**



- **AD said these areas were planted after meeting with Yate Town Council where we looked at opportunities to improve the existing ecological networks in the local area that were created by our planted screen banks.**

- **AD said in October the hazardous tree survey was updated, and contractors have now been to site to tender for necessary tree-felling. Work will be carried out with SGC's Ecological Clerk of Works overseeing the job. The felling licence for the works has been approved, this also gives us TPO consent.**
- **LB asked how many trees would be felled, she said the concern for Yate Rocks would be how much the landscape is going to change.**
- **MB said Heidelberg Materials UK have a duty to remove trees that may cause harm to people or property.**
- **AD replied some were at an early stage of Ash dieback, so could be left a little longer, but not any that are on public rights of way or near neighbours. The disease makes them brittle, if left too long they can be blown over. It's much safer to take them down and replant.**
- **MB asked when in terms of time we could expect to see the work being carried out, September?**
- **AD said possibly before.**
- **MB asked if members of the group could be emailed once we know when felling will start.**
- **AD said all the trees are numbered and some will have a timescale of three months, once these have been identified, we can get in touch and advise.**
- **AD said we are due to Hydroseed the re-graded bank by the Primary in March.**
- **AD said a commemorative oak has been planted for our colleague who sadly lost his life last year.**

Site Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

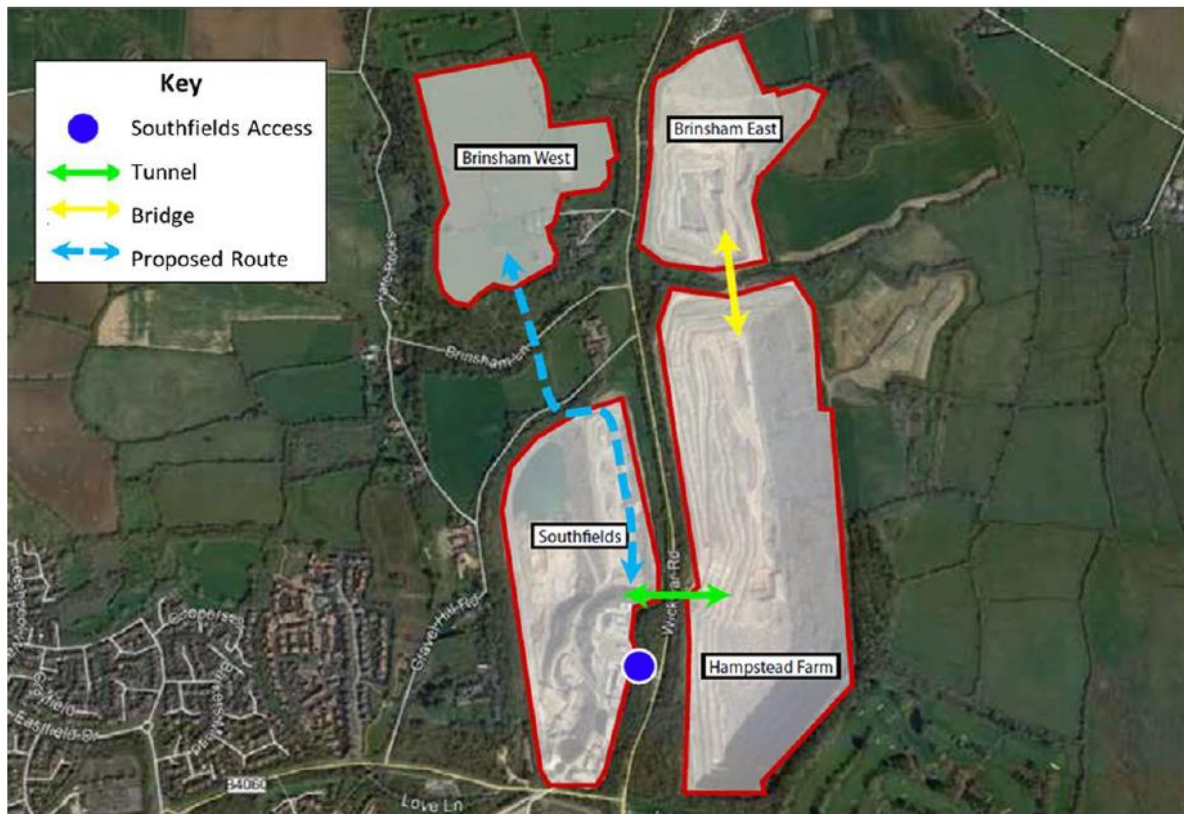
- **AD said the BAP is updated every five years and a lot of it is also reflected in our habitat plan.**
- **AD said future activity includes hedge laying at Wickwar Road, and implementing ongoing vegetation management works in accordance with the existing Newt license for Hampstead ponds”.**



Hydroseeding

4. Land and Mineral Planning update – Trystan Mabbitt (TM)

- TM recapped on the planning application for the propose temporary haul road. Map of proposed scheme below.



- TM said Heidelberg Materials UK was continuing to progress the Brinsham West Application (blue dash line is the proposed route). He said when it was first submitted, the haul road was proposed to be a 2-way road, to allow two dumper trucks to use the route at any one time. However, this has since been amended to a single-track road with passing bays to allow a smaller footprint and respond to feedback as part of the scheme.

- **TM said the haul road will halve the distance across the quarry. Equivalent of saving 500,000km plus travelled during the life of the quarry.**
- **TM said a full carbon emissions comparison indicates that there will be at least 30% overall reduction in carbon savings compared to the consented conveyor tunnel and that of the proposed haul road.**
- **TM said it would also mean a reduction in plant and infrastructure for example, Primary Crusher/Dumper trucks/Tunnel/Conveyor/Haul Road.**
- **TM added that we are working to ensure the revised plans fully tie in with the landscape, taking account of drainage and consultation feedback wherever possible. The revisions are due to be submitted to SGC in the next month or so, and given the additional improvements and efficiencies, we believe we may now be able to realise the overall scheme.**

Proposed temporary haul road.



- **TM said that one of these key efficiencies would be the ability to allow the company to reduce quarry working hours by circa 4 hours during the week, which would have a benefit to the work in Brinsham East and Hampstead Farm in seeking to reduce operating hours across the quarry complex.**
- **MB said that it was not Heidelberg Materials policy for staff to routinely work weekends. Efficiencies provided by the haul road would allow a significant reduction in operating hours, including cutting weekend working. The approach would be to limit Saturday operations in Brinsham West to no more than 12 times a year, and we would inform the council in advance of this. There would be no Sunday or Bank Holiday working, unless in an emergency.**

Specific queries raised

- **LB said she would like to understand more about what is currently practiced vs planning terms in terms of “hours of site operation”.**
- **MB said we currently have the ability to work from 7am – 10pm, but the standard hours worked at Chipping Sodbury quarry are 7am to 5pm in the summer, which is the basic norm albeit this does change subject to demand and operational requirements.**
- **TM said the reduction to permitted hours would help to mitigate the impact of operations on the host community. The details pertaining to this are expected to be captured - in a planning sense - as part of a formal update to the existing wider ROMP permission that covers the site.**
- **LB said she was concerned about the road crossing in Brinsham which looked to be raised.**
- **TM said in the original proposal the crossing did include a raised section, yet following feedback this has since been removed and that the revised plans now see the scheme at road level.**
- **LB asked if there was anything in the plans concerning drainage, as flooding is a massive issue for Yate Rocks.**
- **TM said that the company understood that drainage is a concern throughout the area, where in fact we’ve been out looking at the water courses in the vicinity throughout the day in seeking to establish how we may help mitigate certain aspects.**
- **JR said already seeing a lot of water and flooding at Yate Rocks.**
- **AD said increased flooding nationally is one of the consequences of more extremes of weather and our proposals have and will consider resilience to climate change.**
- **TM said there is the potential to help alleviate this further as part of quarrying with Brinsham West, and we can look at a scheme to be delivered to help assist the wider vicinity given the landholding and associated voids to which we can attenuate water.**
- **MB said Heidelberg Materials can’t solve all the water problems as they are not all caused by what the company is doing.**
- **AD said when quarrying starts in Brinsham West, we can control our water, and that there will be a drainage design.**

- **MB explained that Heidelberg Materials UK employs a hydrologist to do this specialist work and had employed the same one for over 20 years at Chipping Sodbury Quarry. This means they are very familiar with the area, including the situation at Yate Rocks etc at all times of the year.**
- **MB added that the Environment Agency (EA) is ultimately responsible for flood defences, and that it has seen and approved of the plans.**
- **TM said we need to look at the situation holistically as we currently seek to augment the stream to Yate Rocks, pumping water from Hampstead. AD added that the stream is reliant on the water from the quarry to keep it flowing.**
- **JR said there could be a bigger issue, we'll push back to South Glos, and they'll have to come and see the issue for themselves.**
- **MB advised that the EA has already done that, albeit as mentioned, we could be part of the solutions to minimise the impact.**
- **TM said we could as mentioned, seek to balance the overall situation as part of the existing schemes and new ways of thinking surrounding our restoration strategies and the like to assist. To which MB said it's something we can certainly consider.**

5. AOBs

- **AD said that Heidelberg Materials would be launching its Quarry Life Award later in the spring and asked if friends of Ridgewood could get involved.**
- **MB said can you remind me of the prize.**
- **AD said Masters Quarry in Dorset won 10,000 euros.**
- **AD explained that it's a global competition that takes place every three years. It aims to raise awareness of the ecological value of extraction sites and sharing new best practices. Web address www.quarrylifeaward.com.**
- **MB said Heidelberg Materials UK do a lot with their communities. He highlighted that within South Gloucestershire it is funding the new Alveston Pump Track by donating material and labour by staff using their volunteering days.**
- **LB asked if Heidelberg Materials UK has any presence at any of the fairs.**
- **SS said yes, the company is liaising with Chipping Sodbury Festival.**
- **JE said Heidelberg Materials UK said yes to the supply of materials for Kings Skate Park but not heard anything back from Pylon.**

Summary of Actions

1. **MMB to upload “approved” minutes from previous meeting, and draft minutes from this meeting to the Chipping Sodbury Quarry community web page.**
2. **JE to review fencing and signage.**
3. **JE to find out who owns the “Danger Quarry” sign next to the church yard.**
4. **SS to invite Autumn Brook Residents Association to this meeting.**
5. **JE to get a list of contacts who would like to be notified of blasting times.**
6. **JE to speak to the council again about the broken carriage way.**
7. **JE to email members of the group when he has a date for the trees to be felled.**

Proposed dates for next meeting

Thursday 18th April 2024 at 17:00

Thursday 11th July 2024 at 17:00

Thursday 10th October 2024 at 17:00

[ENDS]