

**Batts Combe Quarry**  
**Community Liaison Group Meeting**  
9<sup>th</sup> March 2023  
Meeting Room at Batts Combe Quarry

**MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:**

- Cllr Ben Ferguson (BF) CHAIR Somerset County Council
- Cllr Pauline Ham (PH) Somerset County Council
- Cllr Mike Taylor (MT) Axbridge Town Council
- Nick Hoof (NH) Resident
- Cllr Paul Fineran (PF) Cheddar Parish Council
- Simon Parkes (SP) Hanson Aggregates, Batts Combe quarry unit manager
- Michelle Beasley (MB) Hanson Aggregates, secretariat
- Alex Hemming (AH) Hanson Aggregates, senior landscape architect

**APOLOGIES AND MEMBERS ABSENT:**

- Graham Godwin-Pearson (GP) Sedgemoor District Council
- Steve Hemmett (SH) Avon & Somerset Police
- Jim Hardcastle (JH) Mendip Hills AONB
- Andy Langston (AL) EHO office Sedgemoor District Council
- Ruth Amundson (RA) Somerset County Council Planning
- Sally Devlin (SD) Careers – Kings of Wessex Academy
- Ben Ayers (BA) Hanson Land & Mineral Resource Manager
- James Hynes (JRH) Hanson Land & Mineral Estates Surveyor

## **AGENDA FOR BATTS COMBE QUARRY COMMUNITY LIAISON MEETING**

1. Welcome and Chair introductions – Chair Cllr Ben Ferguson (BF)
  - Membership Update
2. Review of minutes and actions from last meeting – Cllr Ben Ferguson (BF)
3. Batts Combe (Hanson Site) update – Simon Parkes (SP)
  - Feedback & Complaints
4. Hanson Transport update - Simon Parkes (SP)
5. Landscape and biodiversity update – Alex Hemmings (AH)
6. Land and Mineral Planning update – Alex Hemming (AH)
7. Environmental Health update – no attendance
8. District Council update – no attendance
9. Local Resident update – Nick Hoof (NH)
10. Parish Council update (Axbridge & Cheddar) – Cllr Mike Taylor (MT) & Cllr Paul Fineran (PF)
11. AOBs

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **1. Welcome and Chair introduction**

- BF welcomed attendees to the meeting
- Membership update – BF introduced himself and asked everyone if they had reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting, and if they had, were they happy for the draft to be finalised. All attendees said they were happy with the minutes from the previous meeting.
- SP suggested for the next meeting, should they wish, attendees could arrive early, and he would give them a tour of the quarry.

### **2. Batts Combe (Hanson Site) update**

- SP showed an aerial view photo of the quarry to point out the next section where extraction was being planned. SP said the focus was on the mid tip area.
- SP said Batts Combe had received a new environmental permit, which had included the requirement of continuous monitoring on the plant. The monitoring was fitted 4 months ago, and monitors stack emissions (fine particles leaving the plant). The final phase of installation was completed in February 23, and there have been no issues with the monitoring or the compliance to the environmental permit.
- SP said that Hanson has dust monitoring taking place in the village and showed a report from the monitoring station. The report did show dust in the village, but the direction in which it came from meant it did not come from Batts Combe as it was coming from the wrong direction.
- SP advised Batts Combe had started the trial of MP connect, which is a driver's card for hauliers. Hanson's owned fleet and franchise drivers all now have the card. To gain the card, the driver must complete an induction, at the end they sit a test and must get 100% correct. The induction covers opening times, direct routes to enter and exit the quarry, details on restrictions etc. It also logs behaviour and related issues.
- NH asked if it was just Hanson drivers that were using the MP connect system. SP replied that all Hanson drivers have it and 60% of collect customers drivers now have it. It's planned that all drivers that visit Batts Combe will have to complete the induction to gain the card and if they don't have the card, they won't be able to load. SP said most of the hauliers were on board.
- SP showed the complaint log and went through the items.
- MB advised SH could not attend the meeting, but he had emailed an update which MB read to the attendees. SH mentioned in his email he had carried out speed monitoring on numerous occasions and all vehicles had kept to the 15mph speed limit. SH also advised he had spoken to the owner of a car that parks in a narrow part of Venns Gate but was unable to do anything as the car is not parked illegally. However, should a vehicle not be able to pass it in the future, the police should be contacted.

- MB advised SH had called in at the quarry recently and had advised that he had never had a complaint from anyone about Batts Combe Quarry or their hauliers. He said that the group should be encouraging residents to call the police with complaints in the future.
- NH noticed an entry on the complaint log referencing a lorry in Warren's Hill blocking a driveway while having a tyre changed. NH asked if they should go in the lorry park on site and not on the road.
- SP replied they should absolutely use the lorry park for tyre repairs and not the road. A list of approved contractors is currently being compiled which will be given to the drivers to contact in the case of the need to make tyre repairs.
- SP asked for residents to keep an eye on this and report to him any found having tyre changes in the road.
- SP showed the data from the flashing speed sign in Venns Gate. The data showed the speed during the day (6am-7pm quarry opening times) was considerably low, 14mph-16mph and outside of those times and weekends when the quarry is closed the speed increased to 20mph to 30mph.
- NH said he felt the flashing speed sign was placed in a slow part of Venns Gate. SP said it would stay in place for a few more weeks, then it would be moved to another location on the haulier route in and out of Batts Combe Quarry.

### **3. Land and Mineral Planning update**

- MB advised RA was unable to attend this meeting, but she has an update which she would send to include in the minutes. (not yet received.)
- AH advised the site monitoring meeting is booked for Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- AH advised that JRH has been looking into the gate that had been erected across the road leading to the old Chelmscombe Quarry but could not confirm that we have a right of way. He has referred it to our solicitors, but the current land holding shows Hanson has the right to access.

### **4. Landscape & Biodiversity update**

- AH advised the scrub clearance on the "Perch" was now complete.
- AH said two hazel coupes have been coppiced for the benefit of dormice on The Perch. A meeting was also held with the volunteer dormice surveyors to discuss ongoing positive management of the woodland for dormice as numbers are falling due to a range of factors.
- AH advised a sheep and goat count was done in January with the National Trust (NT) and the Longleat Estate. There were not as many as usual but the count is unlikely to reflect accurate numbers, due to the size and complexity of Hanson's landholding. A joint position statement with NT and Longleat on management of the goats and sheep is in its final draft but we are still awaiting confirmation whether the goats and sheep are classed as feral or livestock as this will influence the approach to management.

**5. Hanson Transport update**

- SP covered this in the Hanson site update section.

**6. Environmental Health update**

- No attendance from Environment Agency.

**7. District Council update**

- No attendance from District Council.

**8. Local Resident update**

- NH said he'd been approached by a resident of Venns Gate who was frustrated about the honking of a horn by a haulier who could not pass the car previously mentioned who parks in the narrow part of Venns Gate. She didn't understand why the driver could not just get out and knock on doors to find the owner.
- NH asked if the sheeting should be on before the trucks get to the quarry. SP said, "Hanson encourage it, but it's not legally required by planning, along as there is no material in there".
- NH said reference the 6am collection time, are drivers instructed not to enter the approach road before 6am? SP replied they are told the quarry opens at 6am and not to arrive before this time.
- NH asked if tractors were still using the quarry, SP said a few were but some were still on warning. We've had 1 or 2 in the last few weeks but none that were banned.
- NH said "thank you for the sign on the exit" (referring to 15mph trucks 20mph cars sign) and asked if there were any spare 15mph stickers for the wheelie bins. SP asked how many was required and he would check if he had any stock.
- AH said if any residents walk on The Perch and see anything, please can they get in touch.

**9. Parish Council update**

- MT said there was nothing from Axbridge.
- PH said the stop signs at the end of Axbridge Town had slowed traffic down, but they do not stop. Drivers don't seem to realise it's a gyratory and not a roundabout.
- MB told PF a lady from Cheddar Tennis Club had been in touch to request material for the Tennis Club carpark as a temporary solution to the muddy mess flooding had caused over the winter.
- SP said Hanson could provide the material, labour and machinery as it would not just be a case of filling potholes, it would need to be dug out, levelled and material put down.

### **Parish Council update Cont...**

- PF said a new Pavilion had been built at the site, and the council had plans to get the drainage in for the new pavilion asap. This would happen as early as spring or early summer and the car park would be done at the same time. He asked if Hanson could hold fire on the donation, as it would cause an issue of having excess material, and what to do with it when the carpark is under construction. He said the council may put in a request for help later if that was ok. SP agreed.
- AH said we would prefer to invest in a long-term solution.

### **10. AOBs**

- SP advised Hanson would be sponsoring the “Cheddar Flower Show” again this year.
- NH asked if the quarry would be open on the weekend of the Kings Coronation. SP advised that it would not be operating. NH asked if the residents could borrow cones/barriers for the road closure for a street party, to which SP replied “of course”.

### **Summary of Actions**

- MMB to upload approved minutes from December’s meeting to the Batts Combe web page.
- SP to check stock for wheelie bin stickers.

### **Proposed dates for next 4 meetings**

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024

[ENDS]