

012/08

Novington Sandpit Residents' Committee

Minutes of Meeting Held on Tuesday 8 April 2008 7.30pm, Plumpton Village Hall – Committee Room

Present: Peter Allan, Mike Barnard, Jane Gane, Veronica Harris, Tony Hutson, Jeannie Muddle, Richard Muirhead, Paul Nicholson, Tim Parmenter, Julie Russell, John Sheeran

1. Minutes

Those present approved the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 February 2008.

2. Matters Arising

Para 2 Conditions. The site gate has now been erected.

All other points arising will be considered as part of the meeting.

3. Pre-conditions and conditions generally

Two outstanding pre-conditions remained unchanged – namely: 24 Aftercare and 25 the Ecological Survey, both of which depend on the revised Conservation Management Plan (“CMP”). We received confirmation from ESCC that the CMP is to be resubmitted in the near future. Paul Nicholson was not convinced by this and would continue to press for a conclusion.

Action: Paul Nicholson

4. Activities on Site

Activity has continued with extraction of sand and stockpiling at a relatively low level. Paul had spoken to the operator who had commented that the market is “pretty quiet at the moment”. The operator refused to disclose the volume of truck activity but the meeting concluded that this was minimal. This very day however, truck movements had been higher.

It was noted that the trucks entering site were noisy which is to be expected. It was also noted that the majority of trucks did travel both to, and leave from site, to the south. This was encouraging and Paul would thank the operator for pursuing this policy and note this with ESCC.

Action: Paul Nicholson

Of greater concern was that trucks were leaving site with their loads uncovered. Whilst this may be acceptable in wet conditions, the situation would deteriorate in dry weather. Paul would make ESCC aware of this.

Action: Paul Nicholson

5. Traffic

In addition to the points noted above, the meeting discussed the 20mph indicator on the sign to the west of the Half Moon junction. Paul confirmed that this had been discussed with the Parish Council and it would raise this formally with Highways.

In regards to the Half Moon junction itself the Parish Council had discussed this with ESCC and changes to the signpost for westbound traffic were agreed.

It was generally agreed that the road verges in the whole area were deteriorating as a result of the increase in heavy traffic.

5. Ecology

Tony Hutson reported on his site meeting with the site manager and Jeremy Patterson of ESCC on 22 February 2008. Apart from an issue with the area set aside for the nesting site for little ringed plovers there was little that appeared to concern ESCC.

Tony explained how water levels were being controlled and highlighted that whilst flooding of the site needed to be controlled, this did in fact mean that the water level could not rise above a set level. This may not be good for wildlife or the control of vegetation. He would raise this with the county ecologist.

Action: Tony Hutson

Similarly, there was a concern over water discharges. Paul reminded the meeting that it appeared that the operator did not have a discharge licence. Tony Hutson would mention this to the County Ecologist and Paul would pick up with the EA.

Action: Tony Hutson and Paul Nicholson

6. Date of Next Liaison Group Meeting

This was discussed with reference to correspondence between Norman Baker and the Director of Transport and Environment at ESCC. The meeting was concerned that the operator was unwilling to enter this forum again; the only meeting so far having been in July 2006. Paul Nicholson would continue to press for this to take place.

Action: Paul Nicholson

7. Waste & Minerals Plan

Paul Nicholson outlined the background to this important review process. The consultation on the document is at a very early stage and concentrated on the approach and scoping of the exercise and not on the actual locations of any waste or mineral sites. Paul commented that he thought the process, which is under the joint control of ESCC and Brighton & Hove City Council, is a complex one and full of contradictions. Paul noted that as regards the Novington sandpit, it does appear to

be the only real “unconstrained source of soft sand” in the area and consequently it would be a potential for further development. This view was strengthened by the document’s premise that it might be environmentally less harmful to expand existing extraction sites than to open up new ones. Paul would continue to watch the progress of the plan, commenting to ESCC/B&HCC as necessary and keeping residents fully up to date.

8. Date of next Residents’ Committee Meeting

This will be held on **Thursday 19th June 2008 at 7.30pm** in the Committee Room in the Village Hall.