

August 3, 2018

Planning Services
CES
Norfolk County Council
County Hall
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2SG

**Subject: Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review – Initial Consultation
MIN 48 - Land at Swannington Bottom Plantation, Felthorpe**

Felthorpe Parish Council (FPC) has undertaken a thorough review of the proposed extraction of sand and gravel from the land at Swannington Bottom Plantation, Felthorpe. Our comments and observations are as follows.

Amenity

There is a Public Right of Way along the southern boundary of the site (Felthorpe RB7). With its close proximity to the site, it will cease to be a pleasant countryside amenity asset contrary to the ambitions of the Broadland District Council Spatial Planning team.

Highway Access

Mineral extraction over a 5 year period would add the equivalent of 80 HGV trucks per day to the road network.

Highways England and Norfolk County Council are aware of FPC's efforts to reduce traffic particularly that of HGVs using the village as a cut through, something that the new Broadland Northway has failed to remedy.

FPC is pursuing an HGV restriction along the C260 The Street from the C245 Reepham Road with Highways England undertaking initial research.

Implementation of an HGV 7.5 Ton weight restriction for Felthorpe and Swannington would encompass a far greater area than just the single C260 road and would render this proposed site almost unworkable.

A highway routing agreement to prevent HGV quarry traffic from travelling through Felthorpe or Swannington Uppate would be difficult to successfully implement and almost impossible to regulate.

Pollution

The site is less than 200 metres from the nearest housing and less than 300 metres from the main community. The risks from potential pollution are untenable.

Felthorpe Parish Council

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Air

The predominant winds in the area are south westerly. Smells, dust or other pollutants from the proposed site would be directed towards the village potentially affecting health and quality of life.

Thick dust blowing up into the atmosphere could seriously impact the flying of small planes landing and taking off from Felthorpe Airfield.

Water

A number of properties on Mill Lane are served by private bores, there is a concern that the quantity and quality of the water supply could be adversely affected.

The water course that originates from the Felthorpe Hall Lake travels along the boundary of the proposed site, through water lands and marsh through Swannington Upgate Common. This is an SSSI site. Plants and animals that would be put at risk, and could be lost should there be breach during excavations.

Noise

Operation of the site will not be noise free. Under certain conditions, noise from the Mid Norfolk Shooting Ground in Deighton Hills which is over twice the distance from Felthorpe regularly disturbs the village. The noise from heavy plant and equipment operating continuously would be more intrusive.

Light

Felthorpe is classed as Rural Dark Landscape with no street lighting. Operation of the site during the winter months will regardless of any screening, will impact those living in the area and wildlife.

Wildlife / Biodiversity

Swannington bottom plantation is home to a large and varied number of wildlife species, which include birds such as buzzards, nightingales, tree creepers and nuthatches. Also summer roosting colonies of types of bat, There are badger sets to be found there too.

There are a number of SSSI areas in the surround region, which although considered in the proposal cannot fail to be impacted in some way or form by the extraction site.

Waste Disposal

The Minerals and Waste Local Plan Review does not address the refilling of the site during or upon completion of mineral extraction. It is assumed that the site would be used for waste disposal of some form.

Use as a waste disposal site would increase and extend the various sources of pollution imposed on the village of Felthorpe and traffic would increase as a result. The use as waste site would increase the risk of a bird strike for both Norwich Airport and Felthorpe Airfield depending on the type of waste.

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Restoration

The current proposal indicated that the site will be restored to a heathland habitat. It is understood that the site is private land and that felling of the conifers could take place at any time. However, the loss of one particular type of habitat and replacement with a different type will not necessarily encourage existing wildlife to remain.

Conclusion

Felthorpe Parish Council understands that there is no particular shortage of readily accessible sand deposits in Norfolk for the medium term future. The infrastructure costs associated with extracting a mineral, that is allegedly not in short supply, should prohibit development of this site during the lifetime of this 2036 plan.

Felthorpe Parish Council agrees with the Initial Conclusion that the site unsuitable for allocation as there is still not a mineral operator promoting the proposed site and therefore the site is less deliverable than other sites that have been proposed for extraction. However, in view of our assessment, MIN 48 - Land at Swannington Bottom Plantation, Felthorpe should be excluded in its entirety from the Local Plan.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ben Bates', written in a cursive style.

Ben Bates, Chairman
Felthorpe Parish Council