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20 March 20

Mr S Aldridge  
Team Manager- Development Management  
Worcestershire County Council  
County Hall, Spetchley Road,  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

Dear Mr Aldridge

**Consultation on Planning Application Ref: 19/000053/CM (Land at Lea Castle Farm, Wolverley Rd, Kidderminster, Worcs)**

I am writing on behalf of the British Horse Society (BHS) to provide our comments on the proposed sand and gravel quarry and associated land restoration at the above location. This letter is confirmation of the points raised in my email to you dated 19 March 20.

As this is a long-term proposal (estimated to take approximately 11 years to complete) we are concerned about the immediate and long-term impact on local horse riders given the close proximity to bridle paths (WC-625 and 626) and a local equestrian centre (Lea Castle Equestrian).

As BHS County Access and Bridleways Officer for Worcestershire I must confine my comments specifically to local access issues. However, I am well aware that the proprietor of Lea Castle Equestrian Centre is very concerned about the potential hardship the quarry will cause their business, particularly during the early phases. For the sake of their livery clients and other local riders, if Planning Permission is granted, it is important that there is regular monitoring and review of progress throughout the lifetime of the quarry to ensure that the commitments made by the developers to protect and enhance rights of way for equestrians and other users are delivered to agreed standards and in line with agreed timeframes. There should be a channel of communication to enable local riders to provide feedback if steps taken to minimise disruption are not working in practice.

I would also like to reiterate the comments made by Bobbie Matulja on behalf of the BHS in her response to the Pre-planning Consultation (see email attachment dated July 17 2019). In particular I would draw your attention to the request for an additional multi-user route to the west of the proposed quarry to be achieved by upgrading footpaths WC-623 and WC-624, enabling riders to access the bridleway network and quieter lanes around Drakelow and Kingsford including the permissive riding routes in Kingsford Country Park. This is important given the likely disruption and increased traffic caused

by the proposed quarrying activity and the future development of the old Wolverley Hospital to the east of the proposed quarry.

It is pleasing to see that this additional multi user route has been accepted in the Leisure and Recreation Report (Page 12). However it is not marked on the Phase 3 Map/Plan so I am requesting that this to be added for the sake of clarity. The footpath upgrade should be done formally via a Highways Act Section 25 Creation Agreement to ensure the upgraded routes are recorded on the Definitive Map.

The Leisure and Recreation Report shows the additional route being achieved at the end of Phase 3 (approximately 4.5 years into the development). We would like to see this brought forward to completion within the first 2 years to give local riders another alternative to help mitigate the ongoing disruption they are likely to experience on the existing routes.

The BHS welcomes the additional multi-user routes proposed by the developers for the eastern half of the site but it is imperative that they should be brought into being via a Highways Act Section 26 Creation Order or a Section 25 Creation Agreement to ensure they are recorded on the Definitive Map.

I have one further comment relating to Page 16 of Leisure and Recreation Report, paragraph 6.5 states *"The proposals are supported by the National and Worcestershire Equestrian Society for the local and wider horse-riding community."* This statement is somewhat misleading being open to interpretation. The BHS is concerned to ensure rider access to existing riding routes is safeguarded and any opportunities to improve existing routes and/or create new multi-user routes are identified, implemented and recorded on the Definitive Map. Therefore BHS support is confined to these specific aspects, should Planning Permission be granted, and does not imply support for the proposed development.

Finally if Planning Permission is granted I would like all changes to plans and concessions and comments made on behalf of the BHS to be formally accepted by the developer and made the subject of Individual Planning Conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

Yours sincerely

Wendy Harper  
BHS County Access and Bridleways Officer (Worcestershire)

**Subject:** Proposed Mineral Extraction at Lea Castle Farm - British Horse Society Response  
**From:** Bobbie Matulja [REDACTED]  
**Date:** 17/07/2019 19:17

**To:** [REDACTED]

**CC:** [REDACTED]

Dear Lucy

Wendy Harper and I attended the proposed Lea Castle quarry public consultation meeting at Wolverley on Monday June 17th, and I promised Wendy that I would write to you summarising our thoughts.

Having met the owner of Lea Castle Equestrian Centre at Wolverley Memorial Hall, we understand her reservations about living so close to a working quarry and the disruption it will inevitably cause, particularly during the construction of the plant site and Phase 1 of mineral extraction.

However, we are satisfied with NRS Aggregates' proposals to minimise the impact the quarry will have on bridleways WC-626 and 625 - ie. a) that WC-626 will not be used for vehicular access from the B4189, b) the retention of the existing tree avenue and adding new soil bunds on both sides of the bridleway to screen the sunken plant site and the five phased working areas, and c) that there will be no interruption in access while the subterranean conveyor is built.

The BHS welcomes the site restoration proposals - in particular the creation of 2 km of new shared use tracks for walkers, cyclists and horse riders around the western half of the site. However, the legal status of these tracks was not made clear at the consultation event, either on the plans or from our discussions with Robin Smithyman. If the British Horse Society is to give its full support to this aspect of the proposal, it is essential that these new PROW are added to the Definitive Map as public bridleways supported by Highways Act Section 26 creation agreements, which will give riders the legal right to use them in perpetuity.

I have attached copies of the current BHS guidelines for new shared use routes and the dimensions needed for horses, which I hope will be helpful.

The proposed residential development of the adjacent Lea Castle Hospital site will have a long term impact on Lea Castle Farm and its use after the quarry has been worked out and the land reinstated. With this in mind, Wendy and I discussed the possibility of adding a further shared use route across the eastern half with Robin Smithyman, to create a link with Lea Lane which will improve access for riders and cyclists to the bridleways and quiet lanes around Drakelow and Blakeshall. This will help riders to avoid Castle Road, the main route through Cookley, and it could be achieved by upgrading public footpaths WC-623 and 624 to bridleway, and diverting a short section around some existing properties at the northern end of Brown Westhead Park.

Bobbie  
Mrs Bobbie Matulja  
on behalf of the British Horse Society, Worcestershire  
[REDACTED]

Attachments: