

FOR INFORMATION – Moons Hill Quarry liaison meeting – issues discussed

I attended a virtual meeting on 20th October 2021, concerning Wainwright's quarry. The main points discussed/raised were:

Traffic issues

Wainwright's report that they have been pressing their drivers to control their speeding (for example, through Waterlip). Quarry vehicles have also been fitted with trackers

Support to the local community

A Futures Foundation grant funding initiative was started in 2016. Since then, over £115k has been donated to 131 different causes. To apply for grant funding, simply write to head office. A small committee decides on the allocation of funds. I made the quarry representatives aware of the possibility of our seeking match funding for improvements to the lychgate and Millennium Green.

Three quarry staff carried out litter picking in the village during lockdown.

Complaints received

(1) Blasting noise (early summer). This was subsequently monitored at the site of the complaint, and was found not to approach an agreed limit.

(2) Early morning noise from reversing vehicle alarms (brought to my attention by a parishioner) – Wainwright's are investigating and will report back to me.

(3) Mud on Mendip Road, in the vicinity of the quarry entrance (brought to my attention by a parishioner) – Wainwright's are aware of the issue. Vehicles leaving the site and crossing between east and west sites are the causes. To mitigate the problem, they clean their internal roads, wash vehicle wheels and use a water bowser and sweeper on the public road. In addition, Wainwright's identify agreed travel routes for vehicles leaving the quarry and sweep key points where material might spill out of lorries.

(4) Quarry contractors' vehicles (predominantly Penny's) using Church Street, Tower Hill and Coalpit Lane, on which vehicles over 7.5 tonnes are banned (raised by a fellow councillor). Wainwright's will remind their contractors not to use this route but they advise that Penny's are a customer and not a contractor. Cllr Philip Ham asked for registration numbers of offending vehicles to be passed to him.

Response to climate change and environmental issues

Two new fuel-efficient trucks have been purchased. While they are purchasing some electric vehicles, the large trucks cannot yet be powered this way.

Two water pumps have been replaced, which consume less power.

Ash dieback surveys have been carried out, focusing on high-risk areas such as adjacent to highways.

Meters monitor the quality of discharge water. Environment Agency visits during the last 18 months have shown compliance with required standards.

A quarry boundary hedge alongside Mendip Road has been traditionally laid.

A sustainability co-ordinator has been appointed to develop a sustainability plan for the business.

Quarry operations

Production has returned to pre-pandemic levels and is now 'buoyant.' There has been extensive development, particularly to the site west of Mendip Road. This has involved removal of the 'over burden' to expose the mineral deposits, which are relatively shallow. A bund has been created to hide the over burden tips.

The quarry now employs about 125 people, including 10 apprentices.

The site operates social distancing.

Next meeting

This is provisionally set for 10th March 2022. Please continue to pass any queries or issues to me.

*Cllr Simon Farnsworth
26th October 2021*