

AGENDA ITEM No. 7

PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING

9 FEBRUARY 2007

CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

PART A

1. QUARRYING AT WAGERS FLAT, LONGSTONE EDGE (MIN.2382/JJL)

Purpose of Report

Planning Committee on 19 January 2007 received a report on the removal of limestone at Wagers Flat and agreed that officers would report to this Authority Meeting on the possible basis for a stop notice.

A separate confidential Part B report with the same title will be provided relating to legal and financial issues. For the Part B item, the Authority will be asked to exclude the public from the meeting to avoid disclosure of exempt information. This Part A report provides an opportunity for public participation prior to a discussion under Part B.

Background

During 2006, the Authority took action to limit damaging quarrying activity at Backdale, at the eastern end of Longstone Edge. During consideration of that issue, Members were advised that if a stop notice was served on the operations at Backdale, the operator might commence working at Wagers Flat or Beacon Rod. It was not appropriate at that time to consider whether such future activity might be lawful but Members were advised that if working occurred then officers would monitor it and prepare a report on the quarrying taking place.

The operator commenced activities at Wagers Flat in July 2006. Initially, monitoring showed that the operator was stripping soil and overburden in the vicinity of a known fluorspar vein. Then extraction of fluorspar and limestone commenced, and officers continued to monitor the quarrying activity, assessing whether the limestone being removed from site was in the Authority's opinion a breach of the planning permission.

The report to Planning Committee on 19 January explained the basis on which officers considered quarrying activity at Wagers Flat to be unlawful. Further background to this case was set out in that report.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That this report be noted.

Representations

In preparing the reports to Planning Committee and the Authority, officers wrote to Bremners, the solicitors acting for Bleaklow Industries Ltd and to Marrons, the solicitors acting for MMC Mineral Processing Ltd., seeking information to be taken into account in an assessment of the quarrying activity. The responses received and officer comments on those responses are included in the Part B report.

The Planning Committee report summarised the public correspondence received about the quarrying activities at Wagers Flat and an update on correspondence received was given at committee. Further correspondence has been received, comprising:

- further duplicates of letters summarised in the committee report - a total of 364 duplicate letters have now been received;
- a new duplicated letter in which correspondents register their strong opposition to limestone quarrying on Longstone Edge and their support for the enforcement action taken at Backdale Quarry – 125 of those letters have so far been received;
- a further 6 individual items of correspondence, two of which are critical that the Authority is not preventing the quarrying, and four – including one from Great Longstone Parish Council - expressing support for the Authority's actions.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil.