

**Saturday, 30 August 2014**

**Matter 3**

Question 1

Yes. The spatial strategy is missing for aggregates and it is assumed that quarrying will continue in the present areas with the highest density of rural population in Somerset.

The distribution of carboniferous limestone deposits is largely ignored.

Question 2

No.

Question 3

No. The relevant key issues should be the people of Somerset and their wellbeing, especially those in close proximity to quarries and their function – blasting noise, traffic, light etc. For aggregate quarries these effects are felt some distance from the centre of operations – blasts can be felt for over two kilometres and traffic over a much wider area.

Question 4

No. Aggregates, the key issue appears to be maintaining the supply – pg 9, paragraphs 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4.

Paragraph 3.5 is meant to mitigate adverse impacts and the Somerset Minerals Plan fails in this.

Question 6

No.

Question 7

No.

Question 8

No.

Question 9

No.

Question 10

No.

Matter 3 is discussed in more detail in the attached paper, which answers some of the questions in more depth.

**Saturday, 30 August 2014**

**Matter 3 – Attached Paper**

I hope that almost all the questions are responded to in the following response in relation to Aggregate Quarrying in the Mendips.

Aggregate Quarrying in Somerset is mainly carried out in the Eastern Mendips – the most densely populated rural area in Somerset.

Although many of the inhabitants of the Eastern Mendips have lived there for decades and can remember promises and assurances made by companies and Somerset County Council, the companies change hands at regular intervals, council officers all have a limited time in post, and elected councillor's change frequently.

The quarry companies may not be interested in recalling old assurances and promises, council officers do not have time to read all the previous data and councillors (most from non quarrying areas) have to rely to a large extent on advice from council officers – who may have been in post for only a short time.

This is the background to the comments of the Asham and East Mendips Group – most of its members have lived in E. Mendips for at least 40 years – some for over 70 years.

During this time they have seen Pre-act permission run riot, with many tens of millions of stone removed, ancient roads destroyed, archaeological remains ignored & destroyed and sustainable farm land converted into a sterile, non-productive landscape. Pre-act permissions are due to expire in 2042, and by that date all quarrying in E. Mendips should cease.

People living in Western Mendip designated Eastern Mendip as a sacrificial area. That sacrifice has been made for 60 years – it is time it finished.

I have studied the density population of the Mendip District and the results are as follows:

The rural areas we have considered in three parts:

1/ The area west of Frome, and bounded by the A361 south, and the A362 to the north, and the district boundary on the southern side. The westerly boundary is the A39. This is the Eastern Mendip area where the majority of aggregate quarrying takes place.

2/ The area to the west of the A39, south of the district boundary, north of the A371, and bounded to the west by the district boundary. This is the Western Mendips, where there are massive deposits of carboniferous limestone – shown on Map 3 in Appendix 3 of the pre-submission Minerals Plan.

3/ Other rural areas covered by Mendip District Council.

We then calculated the population densities of all three areas (using 2011 census data).

The results are as follows:

- 1/ Eastern Mendips – Total Population Density per Hectare  
**0.967**
- 2/ Western Mendips – Total Population Density per Hectare  
**0.451**
- 3/ Rest of Mendip District Council – Total Population Density per Hectare  
**0.487**

Total Population Density for all of Mendip District Council Area (Inc. Towns)  
**1.48**

We enclose a copy of the spreadsheet, which we have based these figures on.

We would like to thank Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council for the data from which we have calculated these population densities.

This demonstrates clearly the fact that the Eastern Mendips are densely populated, however the Western Mendip figures are distorted by the Parishes of Rodney Stock, Chewton Mendip, Wookey, Westbury Sub Mendip and Litton which are at the foot of the Mendips, in rich agricultural land. Their parishes extend up to and encompass a lot of the Western Mendip plateau, but the majority of their population is not on the plateau. The Parish of Priddy is indicative of the population density of the Western Mendip plateau – total density 0.14 people/hectare and these are mainly concentrated in the village. This demonstrates that the Eastern Mendips are over eight times more densely populated than the Western Mendips, and almost twice as densely populated as the rural area outside the Mendips.

The Western Mendip plateau is a flattish inhospitable area. The Eastern Mendips have valleys and streams, are fertile, and have attracted a much larger population.

It may be argued that the level of complaint from inhabitants of the Eastern Mendips is low. This is because in the past they have been largely ignored by Somerset County Council.

In Chapter 4 – The vision and Plan Objectives are listed as protecting the quality of life for local communities and history. This the plan fails to do.

Indeed in Policy SD1 it presumes quarrying will continue and the Council will work proactively with local communities. It has not done so in the past – it does not even independently monitor blasting etc.

The proposed Mineral Plan is in conflict with the County Council Plan – paragraph 6.51. It should be remembered that very few people living in the Eastern Mendip are now employed in the quarry industry.

KS101EW - Usual resident population  
ONS Crown Copyright Reserved [from Nomis on 5 March 2014]

population All usual residents  
units Persons  
date 2011  
rural urban Total

english parish / welsh community	All usual residents	Area (Hectares)	Population Density per Hectare	East, West Town	Total Population Density per Hectare for Each Area	Total Population Density per Hectare for Mendips
E04008540: Ashwick	1,352	1,092.09	1.24	East		
E04008545: Binegar	313	244.76	1.28	East		
E04008549: Chilcompton	2,062	706.25	2.92	East		
E04008550: Coleford	2,313	583.22	3.97	East		
E04008551: Cranmore	667	1,818.01	0.37	East		
E04008552: Croscombe	603	758.93	0.79	East		
E04008554: Doultling	618	1,458.86	0.42	East		
E04008558: Emborough	148	760.41	0.19	East		
E04008557: Great Elm	171	308.84	0.55	East		
E04008564: Holcombe	947	313.61	3.02	East		
E04008565: Kilmersdon	541	1,176.86	0.46	East		
E04008567: Leigh on Mendip	514	581.27	0.88	East		
E04008572: Mells	638	1,467.44	0.43	East		
E04008576: Nunney	844	632.86	1.33	East		
E04008586: Stoke St Michael	926	842.59	1.10	East		
E04008587: Ston Easton	550	1,012.48	0.54	East		
E04008588: Stratton on the Fosse	1,108	731.99	1.51	East		
E04008599: Whatley	245	562.62	0.44	East		0.967
E04008548: Chewton Mendip	585	2,366.28	0.25	West		
E04008568: Litton	240	455.04	0.53	West		
E04008581: Rodney Stoke	1,326	1,120.13	1.18	West		
E04008597: Westbury	801	1,193.29	0.67	West		
E04008601: Wookey	1,311	1,237.06	1.06	West		
E04008578: Priddy	624	4,458.46	0.14	West		0.451
E04008559: Evercreech	2,334	2,164.82	1.08	Town		
E04008560: Frome	26,203	832.35	31.48	Town		
E04008561: Glastonbury	8932	2,029.67	4.40	Town		
E04008585: Shepton Mallet	10,369	924.26	11.22	Town		
E04008589: Street	11,805	1,166.62	10.12	Town		
E04008595: Wells	10,536	547.33	19.25	Town		9.156
E04008541: Baltonsborough	864	1,099.13	0.79	Outside Mendip		
E04008542: Batcombe	439	1,308.91	0.34	Outside Mendip		
E04008543: Beckington	983	848.32	1.16	Outside Mendip		
E04008544: Berkley	344	786.54	0.44	Outside Mendip		
E04008546: Buckland Dinham	381	579.58	0.66	Outside Mendip		
E04008547: Butleigh	823	1,750.83	0.47	Outside Mendip		
E04008553: Ditcheat	725	1,497.19	0.48	Outside Mendip		
E04008556: East Pennard	348	1,229.58	0.28	Outside Mendip		
E04008562: Godney	237	1,302.74	0.18	Outside Mendip		
E04008563: Hemington	640	1,862.38	0.34	Outside Mendip		
E04008566: Lamyat	183	416.67	0.44	Outside Mendip		
E04008569: Lullington	162	1,009.31	0.16	Outside Mendip		
E04008570: Lydford-on-Fosse	511	1,028.16	0.50	Outside Mendip		
E04008571: Meare	1,304	2,046.23	0.64	Outside Mendip		
E04008574: North Wootton	317	857.87	0.37	Outside Mendip		
E04008575: Norton St Philip	858	1,098.54	0.78	Outside Mendip		
E04008577: Pilton	998	1,976.35	0.50	Outside Mendip		
E04008579: Pylle	160	451.85	0.35	Outside Mendip		
E04008580: Rode	1,025	459.99	2.23	Outside Mendip		
E04008583: Selwood	798	2,651.06	0.30	Outside Mendip		
E04008584: Sharpham	130	1,698.91	0.08	Outside Mendip		
E04008572: St Cuthbert Out	3,749	5,759.46	0.65	Outside Mendip		
E04008590: Tellisford	182	658.26	0.28	Outside Mendip		
E04008591: Trudoxhill	423	1,221.45	0.35	Outside Mendip		
E04008592: Upton Noble	128	274.32	0.47	Outside Mendip		
E04008593: Walton	1,106	218.55	5.06	Outside Mendip		
E04008594: Wanstrow	489	1,760.73	0.28	Outside Mendip		
E04008596: West Bradley	277	1,017.07	0.27	Outside Mendip		
E04008598: West Pennard	670	1,316.85	0.51	Outside Mendip		
E04008600: Witham Friary	399	2,208.28	0.18	Outside Mendip		0.487
						1.48

In order to protect against disclosure of personal information, some records have been swapped between different geographic areas. Some counts will be affected, particularly small counts at the lowest geographies.

## **The Plan Objectives**

A / The natural and historic environments have been compromised in the past, and if quarrying continues in Eastern Mendips will continue to be compromised.

Grade 1 listed buildings are shaken by blasting, and have been damaged. Historic lanes have been quarried away, new roads have been built in previously beautiful valleys, impinging on Special Areas of Conservation (S.A.C), and destroying parts of their buffer zones. New permissions have been given in buffer zones of S.A.C's.

B/ Local communities have been ignored and suffer from both extraction and transportation. They are rarely employed in the quarry industry. Indeed, all the limestone aggregate quarries are foreign owned.

### **Policy SD1. Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development.**

If local communities are to have any improvement in the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area, no further permissions will be given in the Eastern Mendips, as the adverse impact heavily outweigh any benefits.

### **Policy SMP3. Crushed Rock Extraction.**

- a) There are neither clear economic nor other benefits to the local community, and have not been for many years.
- b) The measures to mitigate adverse impacts in the past have been a failure. The existence of quarries in a densely populated rural area is not viable.

There should be a clear policy stating that quarrying will cease in the Eastern Mendips as soon as practicable, and that no further permission will be given.

#### Question 1

The plan as it affects the Mendips should contain an overall spatial strategy, emphasising:

- i) Where the deposits of carboniferous limestone are.
- ii) The population densities.
- iii) The value of the agricultural land.

#### Question 5

No.

Local Planning Authorities – i.e. Mendip District Council, can thwart the intentions of Somerset County Council, by giving permission for industrial usage of quarry sites.

#### Question 7.

No.

Limestone is chemically active. As rain increases and becomes more acidic, it is likely to make limestone aggregate less useful. It should be noted that it is no longer used for railway ballast (for safety concerns). The cliff faces in limestone aggregate quarries will become less stable.