

Matter 7 Hearing Statement – Land and Mineral Management

In general we will rely upon statements already made but in answer to the Inspector's specific questions, we propose to explain the answers in red inserted below.

Building Stone

2. Is the selection of "needed" building stone types in the Table 2 lists the most appropriate and are the lists exhaustive? **The list should not be exclusive. Other stones may be found.**

4. Briefly explain how "need" has been determined, and whether this determination has been supported by any figures for supply and demand? **Need for building stone is very difficult to identify especially if the stone has not been regularly worked in the past. Lack of previous sales has indeed hindered development of stone resources in the past.**

7. Briefly explain how it has been determined that there may be sufficient need for these stone types and has this determination been supported by figures for supply and demand? **Building stone should not be subjected to requirement to show need.**

12. In Policy SMP5, is criterion a) too restrictive in requiring "*an identified need for stone currently used in Somerset to maintain or enhance the local historic environment*"? How, for example, would an application be treated which demonstrated an identified need for new build where local distinctiveness was a consideration? **The word "historic" should be deleted.**

13. Does the policy discourage planning applications that might be made to satisfy need outside of the County, hence discouraging the export of building stone? If so, is this justified? **Many Somerset stones are sold widely throughout the country. The dimension stone industry is larger than the Council understands. High quality architectural features are created using Somerset's skill base and sold throughout the country. The Plan does not reflect the true nature of the industry.**

In addition the questions do not appear to cover the issues raised by my clients relating to the need for policy support for the development of the dimension stone processing industry, the removal of waste stone from quarries and the importance of importation of other stones to dimension stone processing facilities. I would like the opportunity to expand upon representations made to the Council on these matters.