

Dear Residents

We have not been able to update you for some time on the Sand and Gravel Campaign for several reasons, the chief ones being;

1. Lack of staff at the Warwickshire County Council Minerals Planning Office
2. Sheer complexity of Smiths Concrete planning application and the many interested parties, many of whom have concerns, quite apart from our 2,400 resident objectors.
3. Dilatory response from Smiths to all these submitted concerns, so much so the WCC have served a "Regulation 25" notice to Smiths. This is a formal instrument available to the planning officers to speed up the applicant's response.

However, your committee believe this is working in our favour as it is giving us more time to acquire new information to help our case and hone our commissioned specialist reports. To date we have submitted four more reports to the WCC, one is the first phase of the Transport Report, two relate to the results of scientific research we have commissioned from well known scientists in Air Quality and the fourth report is from Dr John Hunt on the archaeology of Wasperton.

These reports are now available on the Barford Residents Association website ready for you to peruse together with a copy of the Regulation 25 notice from the WCC Senior Minerals Planning Officer, Sally Panayi, just before she resigned. It makes interesting reading.

Further specialist reports are in the pipeline and much work is still being undertaken on your behalf. You will be pleased to know we are keeping within budget on costs.

Once Smiths do eventually respond to the Regulation 25 notice, which we expect will attempt to mitigate all the statutory and residents concerns, we all should be notified with Smiths response. We then only have three weeks to scrutinise it and formulate our own individual response before resubmission to the WCC. We can only address the points raised by Smiths in this second consultation. Your first submissions still count.

If we do not respond to this second consultation, Smiths and the Planning Officers will assume you agree with Smiths mitigations. This will therefore be an important but short time for us. We hope to hold a "Town Hall" meeting in Barford School to which all interested/concerned residents will be invited within two weeks of the notification by WCC of Smiths report. This will be primarily for your committee to give guidance to you on the perceived impact of these mitigations and help inform your formal responses/submissions. It is also an opportunity to update you.

Some of our professional advisors and planning officials believe it will be now the summer, at the earliest, before the Regulatory/Planning Committee sit to adjudicate on the outcome of Smiths application.

We have just been informed from Smiths Concrete that they are now wholly owned by Heidelberg in Germany who are the largest concrete manufacturers in the world. Up till now Smiths have been making the spurious claim that this proposed Wasperton site will create local jobs. In fact they are more likely to transfer employees from their existing local sites. Not only that, it will now be German company shareholders making financial profit at the expense of damage to our community.

Since I started out on this campaign in 2015, we lost an important battle in 2022. By no means have we lost the War. We need your support as much as ever. We can not lie down now and waste the effort and expense by all those of you who, so generously, have given either or both. There is now good reason to believe we are in a better position than 2022.

*Malcolm Eykyn*