

Dear Residents

We still await the response from Smith's to the Regulation 25 request for more information and to address our concerns. As promised in the last edition of Village Voices we take this opportunity to continue to update everyone on the latest position of concerns that many of you have expressed.

Despite numerous requests to our new senior planning officer, we still do not have an indicative time scale when we can expect the new Environmental Planning Statement produced by Smith's in response to the Regulation 25 request.

Flood and de-watering risks. Last year we commissioned a nationally renowned independent specialist to review the application. A copy of his report can be found on the Barford Residents Association website. Professor Brassington visited the site several times, his concerns and recommendations are listed at the front of his report. This report has been sent to all the relevant statutory consultees. At the moment Warwickshire Lead Flood Agency are objecting to the application on the basis of insufficient information provided by Smith's to understand the risks. The LFA have stated that they know the flood risks at Barford well. When Smith's reply to the Regulation 25 our specialist will undertake a further review. The Professor Brassington report covers many issues other than flooding. For instance, he liaised with the Environmental Agency regarding the extraction of water from the Avon and brook and de-watering when the sand and gravel is extracted and its effect on nearby trees and hedgerows etc. He also deals with discharge of potentially contaminated water.

Ecology. Despite Smiths' assertions that we can expect a 10% biodiversity gain from the site the County Ecologist has identified that their calculation has not been correctly undertaken and does not take in to account the estimated 30-year period it will take to achieve the gain. If a roundabout is to be installed more hedgerows will need to be removed further reducing any gain. There are a large number of protected species on-site ranging from mammals to migratory fish spawning grounds. Smiths have acknowledged that they will need to apply for a European Protected Species License to disturb all of the different species. Natural England will in turn impose legally enforceable conditions. We are going to insist that this license is applied for prior to determination of the application. The mitigation of the disturbance and protection measures has a direct impact on the rest of the application, particularly areas that will be need to be set-aside, haul routes around the site and the location of the bunds. We have engaged Bett's Ecology to give us an expert opinion as to whether all is being done to protect the sensitive ecology of the site. *What you can do – when you're walking close to the site can you please look out for the Corn Buntings and a large plant called Greater Water Parsley near ditches and water.* These are both highly endangered and at the moment have not been identified by Smiths application, even though they have been recorded as on-site by the Avon Trust. I have posted pictures of these on the Barford Facebook page. If you have any sightings, could you please DM me. When we receive the Bett's report we will post this on the BRA website.

Traffic. As previously reported we await the decision as to whether traffic lights or a roundabout access is to be installed on the A429. We submitted part 1 of our expert traffic report last Autumn (the report is on the BRA website). Both Smiths and WCC as the Mineral Planning Authority seem to be ignoring our requests and that of the JPC for a footpath, A429 junction upgrades, and a traffic management plan restricting quarry related traffic through the village and Wasperton Lane (as required by the Warwickshire Mineral Plan). We will pursue these with

rigour at the second consultation. Part 2 of our traffic report will be submitted when more is known about the proposed access.

Next steps. Our remaining expert reports relating to landscaping, archaeology, and further air quality issues are being finalised. *What you can do is to be ready to **POUNCE**.* Timescales are not being communicated to us and we will only have three weeks to respond to the second consultation. We plan to have another awareness campaign when the dates are known. It will be similar to the first consultation; you can really help by spreading the message of the second consultation.

Maxine Mayer.