**BACKWELL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

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North Somerset Council

Planning Department

Town Hall

Walliscote Grove Road

Weston super Mare BS23 1UJ

 1 April 2019

Dear Sirs

**Coles Quarry Backwell**

**Planning Application Ref.: 16/P/0674/F**

In April 2016 Backwell Residents Association (BRA) wrote objecting to this application (along with Backwell Parish Council and over 200 other local resident objectors). This application has remained on file, undecided upon, for nearly 3 years, although the Applicant has submitted further details in the last 2 months or so. These latest submissions, together with recent statements made by the NSC Planning Officer enable us to withdraw some of the points made in our 2016 letter which we agree are no longer valid.

**However, taking into account the whole content of the current application, BRA continues to OBJECT**.

Our principal reason for objecting is on traffic grounds. We are not satisfied that the traffic assessment submitted by the Applicants, or the response provided by the NSC Highways Officer, (both of which effectively come to the view that the traffic likely to be generated by the proposed development will not materially affect traffic movements in the local area) are sufficiently up to date and represent the current situation.

The Applicant’s Traffic Assessment takes the 2014 predictions and seeks to extrapolate the anticipated extra traffic generated by a larger scheme. Both this assessment and the Council’s response takes insufficient account of changes to traffic movements which have occurred since the original quarry activities closed, and since the 2014 report.

Notably:

- Traffic using the Recycling Centre has increased overall (way beyond original design estimates). The reduction in opening times (down to 5 days per week and shorter hours), means heavier concentrations of traffic at peak times. It is agreed the proposal to alter the traffic flow through the Recycling Centre (which would accompany the grant of a consent for the industrial units) would help reduce the issue of cars queuing down Churchtown and Dark Lane, but would not reduce the level of traffic accessing the site.

Indeed, the improvement to traffic flow through the site is likely to encourage additional traffic from users finding access easier.

- Dark Lane and ChurchTown are part of an increasingly used “rat run” for vehicles travelling to and from the Airport (where flight user numbers have risen significantly over the last few years).

- The Applicants latest revisions include the removal of B8 use. It is agreed this should lead to a reduction in large HGV usage, which is a benefit. However, experience of similar “technology parks” elsewhere suggest the units would be occupied by small businesses, many of which tend to have high vehicle usage making trips to and from the site throughout working hours.

- The Applicants own figures demonstrate increased vehicle usage (both in total and at peak times) between the 2014/15 consented scheme and the current proposed scheme – which is over 40% larger in floor area.

This increase, taken together with the extra traffic generated by the other three points above, would, in our view, take traffic levels, post 2019, to an unacceptable level (compared with 2014 statistics) bearing in mind the other obvious issues of peak traffic conditions associated with the nearby school, the lack of pavement on the west side of Dark Lane, no facilities for cyclists etc.

**The anticipated additional traffic movement generated by the proposed larger scheme is likely to take traffic conditions in the locality to an unacceptable level, and the application should be rejected on these grounds alone.**

In the event, however, that NSC is minded to grant consent for this application, there are a number of conditions which BRA considers should be implemented:

1. All relevant conditions included in the 2014/15 consent should be replicated.
2. Permitted Development rights allowing a B1 use to be changed to B8, at a future date, to be prohibited.
3. Hours of occupation of the site, and hours of deliveries to be clearly identified.

Deliveries to be prohibited during peak times and school starting/finishing times. Hours of use to be no wider than 8.00a.m. – 8.00p.m.

 4. The application site to be securely fenced and gated. The access roadway to be

 appropriately fenced/blocked to deter vehicular and pedestrian access into the

 remaining vacant quarry area.

 5. The required Applicants Travel Plan to be reviewed up to at least 12 months

 after first occupation (with a clear procedure whereby local residents have the

 opportunity to comment / complain about traffic movements to and from the

 site).

 6 Ensuring the proposed 20mph speed limit on surrounding roads is

 implemented at the earliest opportunity.

We trust that these comments, which represent the views of BRA – an organisation with over 600 local resident members – will be appropriately addressed.

Yours faithfully

Michael Rose