



(<http://www.heri-tage.org.uk/>)

Apple Court,
Hordle Lane,
Hordle, Lymington,
Hampshire, SO41 0HW

Mr. T. Scott,
Planning Inspectorate, Room 4/04,
Temple Quay House,
2 The Square,
Temple Quay,
Bristol BS1 6PN

09 March 2007

Dear Mr. Scott,

I am writing to introduce HERITAGE, Hordle and Everton Residents in Tandem Against Gravel Extraction. Our organisation was set up by local residents in November 2006 to share information and coordinate local response to five sites within the Parish listed in the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework as requiring further investigation. Hordle Parish has 2372 dwellings and a population of 5095 persons. Over 400 people attended two public meetings and Hampshire County Council has received some 1500-2000 letters objecting to gravel extraction in our Parish. Two of the five sites in Hordle Parish have now been withdrawn.

Individual families living in Hordle Parish have objected earlier to the proposal to turn Downton Manor Farm into a gravel extraction site, although it was not until the three current sites for investigation were known that the enormity of the potential devastation of our environment was realised by most residents and how important it is to those living in Hordle Parish that Downton Manor Farm does not become a gravel/landfill site. HERITAGE is not able to be joined to the Downton Manor appeal in view of the date of its formation. However, in view of the close links we see between the Downton Manor Farm proposals and the three sites in Hordle Parish we wish to put our views to you.

Hordle Parish borders the north side of the A337, and the Downton Manor Farm site runs along our border. The three sites of concern to Hordle Parish residents are Yeatton Farm and Leagreen Farm (2 sites), which are directly opposite the Downton

Manor Farm. Attached herewith is a map showing the area which will be impacted should Downton Manor Farm and the Hordle Parish farms become gravel/landfill sites. It is this map that provides stark clarity on the potential extent of gravel extraction in our Parish – and given the contact between the gravel industry and Hampshire County Council on their plans for the Yeatton Farm site a very real threat.

Our objections to the inclusion of these three sites in Hordle on a list of preferred sites cover a number of issues. Briefly, development of these three sites for gravel extraction/landfill will destroy our local environment and community, seriously affect the health and wellbeing of those who live here and it will have a tragic impact on the economy and future of the Parish. We do not accept that if these three sites become gravel extraction sites that they will not be used subsequently for landfill sites nor do we believe that the two sites which were withdrawn will be immune from future use for the same. We base this view on a review of other sites where one gravel extraction site leads to others. Given waste disposal needs from urban conurbations we believe that these large holes will inevitably become landfill sites. We do not accept that destroying the villages of Everton and Hordle – either from a human habitation aspect or from an economic point of view – is acceptable or necessary.

We are aware from documentation received under the Freedom of Information Act that the gravel industry is already in contact with Hampshire County Council with plans for the development of Yeatton Farm in tandem with Downton Manor Farm. In addition we have learned that a formal request has now been made to HCC for the Lea Green farm sites to become preferred sites.

In view of the proximity of Downton Manor Farm to Hordle Parish boundaries and the three sites still under investigation HERITAGE is a totally independent organisation but there are clear mutual interests between supporters of HERITAGE and DAMAGE.

We wish to draw to your attention that whilst the subject of this appeal is the gravel extraction at Downton Manor Farm the several other sites in close proximity, even though not yet short listed by HCC, are already the subject of approaches, with plans, to HCC. The impact on the environment and economy of this part of Hampshire, part of the New Forest District, is inestimable. HERITAGE believes that if Downton Manor Farm is permitted to become a gravel extraction site that the sites of our concern will follow in short order ruining our community, our environment and the economy of our villages.

We therefore urge you to reject the appeal against the HCC decision not to permit Downton Manor Farm to become a gravel pit.

Yours sincerely,

Angela Meads,
Chairman, HERITAGE