

**WSSC CONSULTATION RESPONSE:
County Planning – Minerals & Waste Planning Authority**

TO:	Case Officer: Joanne Fisher
DATE:	19/03/2025
LOCATION:	Land At Colwell Farm, Lewes Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex
SUBJECT:	DM/25/0445 Outline application with all matters reserved except for access, for up to 80 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, infrastructure and vehicular and pedestrian accesses.
RECOMMENDATION:	☐ Advice ☐ More Information ☐ Objection ☐ Consulted in Error ☐ No Objection ☒ No Objection Subject to:

WSSC Joint Minerals Local Plan (March 2021)

The application relates to the delivery up to 80 dwellings to the land to the south of Lewes Road, Haywards Heath, and is partially located within the identified Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) for Building Stone (Cuckfield Formation). Accordingly, it is necessary to assess the proposal against Policy M9 (b) of the JMLP, which reads as follows:

Policy M9 (b)

(b) Soft sand (including potential silica sand), sharp sand and gravel, brick making clay, building stone resources, and chalk reserves are safeguarded against sterilisation. Proposals for non-mineral development within the MSAs (as shown on maps in Appendix E) will not be permitted unless:

- (i) mineral sterilisation will not occur; or*
- (ii) it is appropriate and practicable to extract the mineral prior to the development taking place, having regards to the other policies in this Plan; or*
- (iii) the overriding need for the development outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral and it has been demonstrated that prior extraction is not practicable or environmentally feasible.*

The applicant has provided a brief assessment of the potential safeguarded resource within their submitted Planning Statement. The assessment concludes that, while it is understood that there is a underlying mineral resource of building stone beneath the site, the prior extraction of this resource would not be economically practicable or environmentally feasible as a result of: the relatively small site area (6.2ha), the overriding need for the non-mineral development, lack of accessibility to the site and unsuitability for HGVs and amenity impacts relating to noise, air quality and traffic as a result of the mineral extraction process. The assessment makes no reference to the potential quality or quantity of the underlying mineral resource and, as a result, the extent of mineral sterilisation that would occur as a result of the non-mineral development is currently unknown, although it



is inevitable that mineral sterilisation will occur should the proposal be approved at this stage.

While it is disappointing that the extent of sterilisation is currently unknown, and no effort has been made to secure any of the underlying resource as part of the development (either in part or as incidental extraction the enabling works of the development) for use within the development or export to local operators, the MWPA would note that the site is only partially underlain by the resource within the eastern and southern application site boundaries. As a result, it is not expected that the development of the 6.2ha in its entirety would result in the same area of mineral resource being sterilised.

Regardless, should the LPA deem necessary, consideration should be given to the potential usefulness of this resource within the local built landscape or the proposed development itself, and the MWPA would recommend that the LPA contact their Conservation Officer to fully assess the level of weight to afford the safeguarding of this resource (see 2.5 of the MWS [Guidance](#)). If necessary, the applicant should provide a full Mineral Resource Assessment, including an assessment of the quality/quantity of the underlying building stone, and identify any potential outcrops that may be suitable for prior extraction either within the site or to export to local operators.

Therefore, the MWPA would offer no objection to the proposal, subject to the LPA being satisfied that the value of the resource has been duly assessed, in conjunction with comments from their Conservation Officer, to demonstrate that the prior extraction of the mineral resource is economically unpracticable or environmentally unfeasible. Should the comments from the CO inform a requirement to deliver the mineral resource, either in part or in full, then the MWPA would request that we are reconsulted, with the extent of the resource and its potential for prior/partial extraction assessed within a full Mineral Resource Assessment.

Kind regards,

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