

**From:** Jonathan Richards

**Sent:** Wed 21/04/2010 12:31 PM

**To:** Ben Miller

**Subject:** RE: Somerset aggregates paper – issues for consultation, January 2010

Dear Ben,

Here are the comments of the Mendip Hills AONB Unit relating to the Somerset Aggregates Paper – issues for consultation, January 2010.

Qu.1 We consider that environmental protection is also a relevant issue in terms of quarrying in Somerset.

Qu.2. In order to adequately protect Somerset's environmental assets such as the Mendip Hills AONB, the annual provision of crushed rock in the County should be determined having regard to constraints imposed by the national landscape designation of the AONB.

Qu. 10. Lateral development to limited depth could, in some circumstances, give more flexibility in terms of end use and landscape profiles. This may provide opportunities for greater mitigation of changes to landform and consequent visual intrusion within protected landscapes such as the Mendip Hills. Such outcomes would reflect the objectives of the current AONB Management Plan.

Qu.14. The most significant existing and potential impacts of quarrying in terms of the nationally designated Mendip Hills AONB are:

- its damaging effects on the natural beauty and character of the landscape through visual intrusion, change of landform etc;
- loss of tranquillity through noise, vibration/ blasting and traffic;
- lowering of air quality as a result of dust and traffic pollution;
- threats to biodiversity as a result of the above noise and pollution;
- threats to archaeological, heritage, geological and geomorphological features;
- threats to the important water environment within the AONB.

The Minerals Core Strategy will need to reflect the Mendip Hills AONB Management Plan in addressing the above impacts.

Qu.18. The Mendip Hills AONB Unit does not feel that there should be a buffer to resource boundaries within the designated landscape. We consider that within a nationally protected landscape there should be constraints on further minerals working to reflect its status in terms of natural beauty and landscape character.

Regards

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The Mendip Hills AONB Unit is the Voice of the Protected Landscape  
Naturally Beautiful, Nationally Protected