

Mr.A.Smith OBE
Chief Executive
County Council Headquarters
The Castle
Winchester
Hampshire
SO23 8UJ

27th April 2012

Dear Mr.Smith

Purple Haze

I have been instructed by the Town Council to write to you regarding the above.

As I am sure you will be aware the residents of Verwood have voiced strong opposition to the proposed minerals and landfill proposals at the Purple Haze site contained in the Hampshire Mineral and Waste Strategy.

I have been instructed to write to you to express the Town Council's concern regarding an article in the Bournemouth Daily Echo on the 22 March 2012, which made references to comments from Cllr. Kendall in which he stated that there was never any mention of an 800m distance from Ebblake Bog at the council meeting, when Members voted the draft plan through to soundness. This was certainly not the case where a number of our local Councillors and residents witnessed the Council meeting, during what was a very long period of deputations and debate.

Cllr. Kendall's remarks are at best unfortunate and have caused considerable unrest in the Town.

Cllr. Kendall seems to suffer from a selective memory problem. As many recall it was HCC who had amended the strategy before the Council meeting on the 13 October 2011, reducing the mineral extraction at Purple Haze by 50%. Further that work, subject to planning permission, would commence at the furthest point away from Verwood. On that basis the nearest the extraction site to Verwood would, by definition, be some 800 metres or so away from Ebblake Bog.

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We have approached the Leader of East Dorset District Council – Cllr. Spencer Flower, who attended and spoke at the Council Meeting. Looking back at his speech it is clear that he did ask that the red hatched area designating the Purple Haze site be redrawn to exclude the 50% of the site that was not to be used for mineral extraction during the plan period. Your Council were not willing to do this arguing that they would have more control over the use of this land if the red hatched area remained as designated of the location plans. Many were not convinced that this is necessary as this land would, by definition, be excluded from any development because it would not be in the strategic plan.

There remained great concern about the permanent environmental damage mineral extraction will have at this location, in particular the Ebblake Bog where many expected the precautionary principle to be applied by HCC. The Town Council remain concerned about the assumption that suitable mitigation to protect the Ebblake Bog can be achieved during the planning process.

Can we be reassured that Cllr. Kendall's remarks do not reflect the position of your Council and that the extraction site remains 800 metres further away from Verwood as set out in the revised site plan used at your Council meeting, which informed Councillors and public alike as to the exact location of the Purple Haze site.

The Town Council looks forward to your written reassurance in response to this letter.

Yours sincerely

Town Clerk

c.c Councillor S.Flower, Leader of East Dorset District Council
Friends of Ringwood Forest.
Verwood Town Councillors
Ms.J.Windwood, Planning Officer, East Dorset District Council.