Notes from public meeting to discuss Divet Hill Quarry and Superfast Broadband, held on Tuesday 24th July 2018 commencing 6pm in Bavington URC Church Hall

**Those Present:** Bavington Parish Councillors P Acton, N Bell, C Hogg, P Ramsden, fifteen members of the public,

**Speakers:** D Wilkins, R Marsden, L Rawles

**6PM Meeting with Cemex representative, Donald Wilkins and Robert Marsden to discuss issues with Divet Hill quarry**

Cemex are the leading global producer and marketer of cement, concrete and other building

products, employing approximately 3500 people at 300 locations, with 2 quarries, 2 concrete

plants and one asphalt plant in Northumberland. Company have partnership with RSPB, to gain

advice when planning developments to minimise impact on ecology and habitats, with

biodiversity strategy developed. Whin outcrop/hard dolerite stone of interest to Cemex, and

is fairly geographically limited. Some Divet Hill quarry areas have already been restored, with

works carried out this Summer. Details of extension proposal with planning application

submitted; approximately 250,000 tonnes per annum extracted. Divet Hill Farm Extension –

estimated 700,000 tonnes of dolerite equivalent to approximately three years extraction,

located wholly and centrally within the existing quarry boundary on ground already disturbed

by quarrying activities and close to existing operations. Various professionals advising on

quarry restoration strategy with main priority to create a whin grassland, a diverse mix of

different plant species which have been in decline, with County Ecologist keen to maximise this

* whin grassland restoration occurs on the thin soils that are present on the rocky

outcrops of the great whin sill, a habitat mainly of botanical interest and almost unique to Northumberland.

Future Development Opportunities discussed - current permitted extraction area likely to last

2-3 years; operations would then be moved down to Divet Hill Farm which would give another

3 years. Scoping report submitted last year relating to south eastern extension. Northern

Extension would involve 2,100.000 tonnes, approximately 7 years extraction, crushing and

processing within existing quarry void, potential planning application Winter 2018/19.

**Community Questions**

Haywood Field - When hauling material out, this will be well contained within quarry void

and reduce noise etc. It was thought similar proposals 20 years ago had been refused

– however Cemex not aware of any historical refusal and believe this area has merits for gaining

consent.

When blasting in quarry, houses in Great Bavington shake, and what assurances can be given

regarding structural damage? – materials used on site are packed into casing and drilled down,

which creates displacement of air which is not vibration. Blasts are monitored and stuctural

effects on housing start at 20ppv, with Divet Hill quarry being 1-2ppv, and quarry can be asked

what the ppv (peak particle velocity) is, and mitigation can be implemented to ensure vibration

levels stay within approved levels.

Screening for northern extension not yet detailed, however soil will be stripped back and

bunded around the site edges to extract the mineral, volumes to be calculated for soil resource,

areas screened, and height dropped through existing working area.

Southern extension – still work behind the face, advanced planting being considered and

landscaping visual assessment required.

Village is very concerned about noise and dust pollution – this is assessed as part of planning

application. Crushing is the main noise with mobile crusher used, and which would move from current operations down to the Divet Hill Farm part of the site. Drilling rig would operate three days per month, which does cause noise, but is not a continuous activity. Cemex not currently in breach of statutory requirements.

Huge amount of dust comes off on occasion – plant runs suppression, occasionally has issues,

and serious issues should be flagged up with Cemex.

Reinstatement of bridleway for safe passage of horse and rider – area needs

strimming and Cemex will re-surface and fence the bridleway.

The proposed area of development that has created the need to re-route the electricity cables

is concerned with the existing extraction area, and will be around the field boundaries to tie into existing supply.

Noise mitigation measures put in place after monitoring 26/3/18 – which did not highlight any

issues and showed low noise levels, therefore no additional mitigation put in place. Dust levels

not monitored from the site, but Health & Safety assessments carried out, water suppression,

and drop heights minimised. Divet Hill Farm application set out types of mitigation

measures implemented on site.

Actual locations of potential to work are limited, no doubt there could be other sites elsewhere in Northumberland, but Cemex not aware of any at the present time.

Restoration plan – area would need resoiled, some more than others, with progressive

restoration having commenced, and potentially restored to agricultural use.

No proposals for land to be used as landfill, but would only be used for demolition and

construction waste, if at all.

Divet Hill application determination expected soon.

Speed of lorries excessive, particularly bend at Little Bavington – Cemex reiterate site rules for

all wagons and problems can be reported to site. Hauliers get paid for what they deliver,

however Health and Safety is imperative, and there is a three strikes and out policy for drivers.

Sludge runs down quarry road, onto main road and blocks gutter ends, with quite dangerous

pools forming when there is a lot of water – Cemex to look into this.

Cemex representatives then left the meeting.

Parishioner reported noise level is high at Little Bavington.

It was believed that the proposal for the Northern quarry extension had been refused twenty yearsago, due to their being a triple SSI at the time.

**7PM Meeting with inorthumberland to discuss the current provision of Superfast Broadband within the parish, the plans for further roll-out, the current availability of mobile telephone reception and the potential of a bid to the Ray Windfarm Fund CIC for support for perceived shortfall**

Inorthumberland personnel unable to attend meeting, therefore parishioner Lynne Rawles gave

presentation. Ray Wind Farm Community Interest Corporation (CIC) have £250K

per annum to spend in the area affected by wind farm; Inorthumberland is tasked by County

council to facilitate broadband rollout and BT openreach are the fibre provider. A group have

been in discussion with inorthumberland and BT for over a year, with no data or costings yet

available. CIC funding to cover all parishes within 10km of turbines for all properties to have

access to superfast broadband. The community would need to create a formal grant

application to access the funds and the formation of this is yet to be decided. Current options

– inorthumberland strongly recommend fibre, second option wireless or satellite and third

option 4G. Current challenges being no reliable data from inorthumberland, terrain and

changing government policy and funding. Next step is to form a Bavington Community

Broadband Group, gain proof there is a community need, gain technical expertise and

volunteers to put proposal together for the parish, with interested persons to contact

Lynnerawles@gmail.com, who it was agreed would lead the community group. One

parishioner present does have technical knowledge and had spoken to an Openreach engineer

who had indicated there was no possibility to fibre within Bavington parish, however parts of

neighbouring parishes receive an adequate service and Bavington should expect the same.

 **ACTION: Voluntary Group to be created.**

The meeting closed at 7.05pm.