

1 RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNCIL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

2 Minutes of the virtual meeting of the
3 Planning and Development Committee held on
4 Thursday, 26 August 2021 at 3.00 pm.

5
6 County Borough Councillors - Planning and Development
7 Committee Members in attendance:-

8 Councillor S Rees (Chair)

9 Councillor G Caple Councillor J Bonetto
10 Councillor P Jarman Councillor D Grehan
11 Councillor G Hughes Councillor W Lewis
12 Councillor W Owen Councillor S Powderhill
13 Councillor J Williams Councillor D Williams

14 Officers in attendance:-

15 Mr J Bailey, Head of Planning
16 Mr S Humphreys, Head of Legal Services
17 Mr. A. Rees, Senior Engineer
18 Mr G Purnell, Pollution Control Officer
19 Mr. N Pilliner, Environmental Protection and
20 Housing Standards Manager

21 County Borough Councillors in attendance:-

22 Councillor R Bevan, Councillor H Fychan, Councillor M Powell
23 and Councillor T Williams

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25 (Transcript of a digital recording by
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2 THE CHAIR: Good afternoon and welcome to this virtual Planning
3 and Development Committee of 26th August 2021. Are there any
4 declarations of interest? Councillor Jarman?

5 COUNCILLOR JARMAN: Thank you, Chair. I would like to repeat the
6 interest I declared previously on application 20/1182. The
7 applicant is known to me as a local resident. I have spoken
8 to him on one occasion, not to discuss the application, but to
9 confirm that a site visit was held on a certain day. Thank
10 you.

11 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Jarman. Can I get a motion,
12 please, to observe the Human Rights Act?

13 COUNCILLOR CAPLE: I move, Chair.

14 COUNCILLOR GREHAN: Seconded, Chair.

15 THE CHAIR: That is seconded. And all those in favour? Yes.
16 Secondly, can I get a motion to observe the Wellbeing of
17 Future Generations Act.

18 COUNCILLOR CAPLE: I move, Chair.

19 A SPEAKER: Seconded, Chair.

20 THE CHAIR: All those in favour? Thank you members. We next move
21 on to the minutes of 24th June 2021. I am going to call in
22 the legal officer, Mr. Humphreys, first.

23 MR. HUMPHREYS: Thank you, Chair. I would like to request the
24 members move the minutes subject to an amendment to minute 15,
25 to read "The Head of Planning presented the report to

1 Committee and following lengthy consideration, it was RESOLVED
2 to approve the taking of enforcement action in accordance with
3 the recommendation of the Director, Prosperity and
4 Development, but subject to reducing the time for compliance
5 recommended for 12 months to 6 months from the day the notice
6 takes effect, as the development intensifies the use of a
7 substandard lane that lacks adequate vision splays, a turning
8 area, suitable carriageway width, passing bays and adequate
9 structural integrity, which would be to the detriment of
10 highway safety and the free flow of traffic on the A4059,
11 consequently, it is considered that the development does not
12 comply with Policies AW5 and NSA12 of the Rhondda Cynon Taf
13 Local Development Plan".

14 The reason I request that is that normally the minutes
15 refer to approval in line with officer's recommendation, but
16 in this case the report was confidential, so I think it is
17 appropriate that we specify the reason in the minutes. Thank
18 you, Chair.

19 A SPEAKER: Subject to amendment, Chair.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you. Is that seconded? Councillor Jarman, you
21 have your hand up.

22 COUNCILLOR JARMAN: For the record, Chair, I was not present at
23 that meeting. Therefore, I cannot give a view as to whether
24 or not the amended version that Mr. Humphreys referred to
25 should be approved. So, on that basis, I will be abstaining

1 from voting because I was not present at the meeting.

2 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you for that Councillor Jarman.

3 A SPEAKER: I will second Councillor ----

4 COUNCILLOR J WILLIAMS: It was a really good addition, I think,
5 because that is what we said, was it not?

6 THE CHAIR: Yes, it was. Okay. In terms of the minutes of 24th
7 June, it has been moved and seconded that they be approved,
8 subject to the amendments made by Mr. Humphreys there. All
9 those in favour? Yes, I cannot see any dissenters there.

10 COUNCILLOR JARMAN: Can my abstention be recorded, Chair?

11 THE CHAIR: Yes, certainly Councillor Jarman. I am going to call
12 Councillor Williams in. I am suspecting he may want to
13 declare an interest.

14 COUNCILLOR D WILLIAMS: Yes. My system kicked out there, Chair.
15 As soon as I pressed the button to press "record", it knocked
16 me out so I do not know what part of the agenda we are at.
17 Yes, I would like to declare interest on Application
18 21/0720/15, continuation of quarrying at Craig Yr Hesg Quarry.
19 It is a personal and prejudicial interest and I will be
20 leaving the meeting. The reasons for the declaration are that
21 I am a member of the Hanson Quarry Opposition Group.

22 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you for that, Councillor Williams. That
23 moves us on then to the agenda for today. The first item,
24 which is item 5 on the agenda, an application recommended for
25 approval, is Application for 21/0720, which is continuation of

1 quarrying and related operations without complying with
2 conditions 1-4 inclusive and conditions 45 and 46 imposed on
3 the Environment Act ROMP schedule of conditions issued by
4 Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council on 24th April 2013
5 at Craig Yr Hesg Quarry, Berw Road, Pontypridd."

6 Now, we have a number of speakers asking for permission
7 to speak on this agenda item. The first person I will call in
8 is the agent on behalf of the applicants, Mr. Graham Jenkins.
9 Mr. Jenkins, if you can unmute yourself, you can address the
10 committee for up to five minutes when you are ready.

11 MR. JENKINS: Okay, thank you very much. Thanks for the
12 opportunity. The current time limit at the quarry of December
13 2022 is derived from a planning permission for a quarry
14 extension granted in 1993 and was based upon assumptions about
15 future output made at that time. Annual output fluctuates
16 according to market demand and it is unsurprising that almost
17 30 years later, those original assumptions have been shown to
18 be less than perfect, such that a reserve of some 3 million
19 tonnes remains to be worked.

20 In granting permission for the quarry extension in 1993,
21 the authority concluded that it was acceptable to work the
22 full reserve referred to in the permission. The only issue
23 which is now preventing the working of that reserve is the
24 time limit, which can now be amended to allow the completion
25 of the development and restoration of the site as proposed.

1 The quarry has reached its full limits and there will be
2 no changes to the current working area. The current
3 application is a simple request to be able to work the
4 remaining reserves as originally permitted, but over an
5 extended timescale of six years. The planning conditions
6 imposed by RCT on the Environment Act review of the conditions
7 in 2013 were deemed to be adequate to regulate the
8 environmental effects of the development, including conditions
9 on restoration. These or very similar conditions can remain
10 in place for the requested extended duration. The planning
11 officer has confirmed his view that the impact can be
12 controlled to nationally set standards, noting that no
13 objections have been raised by statutory technical consultees.

14 The planning officer's report also highlights what is
15 referred to as an overriding economic need for the mineral,
16 and in that context, Hanson would not have made the time
17 extension application if there was no need for the mineral.
18 Permitted reserves of hard rock aggregate in RCT are below the
19 required minimum for a 10 year land bank and if the permitted
20 reserves at the quarry are removed from the land bank in 2022,
21 then the overall reserve shortage would be exacerbated.

22 RCT has made a commitment towards contributing towards
23 local, regional and national supplies of aggregate. That is
24 set out in LDP Policy CS/10. It would not be appropriate to
25 rely adjoining authorities to make good the current shortfall

1 in provision within RCT or to unnecessarily exacerbate the
2 situation by refusing the application.

3 The quarry also has an important to role to play for the
4 supply of nationally important high-specification aggregate in
5 contributing to the growth of the economy as the country
6 emerges from the Covid pandemic. The quarry is also an
7 important employer with 19 direct and 10 indirect employees
8 and a further 50-60 hauliers. The retention of this
9 employment is important, particularly at a time of growing
10 rates of unemployment, again as a result of the Covid
11 pandemic. So, I thus urge members to focus on the reasons
12 given by the planning officer as to why permission should be
13 granted, and to accept what is a compelling recommendation to
14 approve the application. Thank you very much.

15 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Jenkins. I now move on to objectors to
16 the application. The first person I am going to call in is
17 Mr. Malcolm Hervey.

18 MR. HERVEY: Yes. First of all, I would like to say that I have
19 got no problem with the quarry staying there for a further 20
20 years as far as I am concerned. I am not anti quarry or not
21 for quarry. I do not care. But I do live next door to the
22 quarry and the planning application area goes right up to my
23 front door. So as you look at the plan, the red line goes,
24 well, it cuts my land in half and puts the land clearly,
25 sorry, the planning permission, right up to my front door.

1 So, if any person was to look at this planning permission,
2 they would think that they have got planning permission to dig
3 right outside my front door, which meant if I walked out of my
4 front door, I could find a big hole where the quarry is.

5 Now, I know, and any sensible person would know, that
6 they are not going to dig my driveway up. I am not saying
7 that that is the plan at all. However, what I am saying is
8 because that is what it looks like, if I was to try to sell my
9 house any time in the next six or seven years, anybody looking
10 at this planning permission will think that the plan is to do
11 that. Now, I know that a good solicitor would explain the
12 situation and would explain that they are not going to do
13 that. However, there are very few good solicitors out there,
14 and most of the time, when you are buying land or buying
15 houses, it is left up to some junior in the office to do the
16 searches and to hand them over to the person buying the house.
17 So, I could quite easily find that my house does not sell any
18 time whenever I want it. In fact, it probably would not sell
19 at all because of these plans. That is really my only
20 objection so I shall pass the floor back.

21 THE CHAIR: Thank you for that. I will now move on to the next
22 objector then. This is Royston Davies. Mr. Davies, when you
23 are ready, you have five minutes to address the committee.

24 A SPEAKER: Chair, I do not think Mr. Davies has been able to join
25 the meeting.

1 THE CHAIR: Okay. In that case, we will move on to the next
2 objector, which is Sian Griffiths. You are still on mute
3 there. *(Pause)*

4 MS. GRIFFITHS: Bear with me, sorry.

5 THE CHAIR: We can hear you now.

6 MS. GRIFFITHS: Thank you. I would like to address the Committee
7 on the experience of living in Glyncoch. I live in Ashford
8 Close. It is a bungalow. When they blast or bomb, as we
9 locally say around here, it shakes the foundations of my
10 property. The tremor underneath the floor, you feel the whole
11 house shaking. My father lives next door. He is 87. He says
12 when the bomb blasts, it terrifies him and it is starting to
13 affect his mental health because I have got to tell him
14 beforehand that they are going to blast because otherwise he
15 will not know what is happening, and then when it does blast,
16 he is really upset about it.

17 There are a number of elderly people where we live.
18 They have not got the technology, they cannot speak for
19 themselves, but I can speak for my father. He has also had an
20 incident back a few years ago where he physically was out of
21 the chair through the intense blasting that occurred. Our
22 cars, our patio tables in the summer, with the dust, you
23 cannot enjoy living here. Like the caller said before, what
24 are these houses going to be worth? Nobody is going to want
25 to live here with what is going on at the moment. It is

1 physically and mentally disturbing.

2 The other thing I have got to mention is the traffic.
3 You drive down the A470 and there are signs all the way, "50
4 pollution". Surely that pollution is here too -- we are only
5 three miles up the road -- with all the dust and the things
6 that come from the quarry. You have got the lorries backed
7 up. Going to work in the morning, you can often be in a queue
8 because a lorry and a bus cannot pass, you know.

9 My experience of living here is getting worse. The
10 blasts are getting more intense. It feels like an earthquake.
11 If I could say to the Committee, you have got to live here and
12 you have got to physically experience it. Unless you live in
13 a house that is rocked and moved, you cannot imagine what that
14 is like. I would like to invite anyone to stay here on a
15 blasting day and feel the physical house move. I cannot put
16 into words what it is like, but I know one thing, we can
17 endure no more of this. I think I am personally at my lowest
18 ebb with it all.

19 You know, we get updates to say, okay, you know, we
20 talk, what did you think of that blast, and they are
21 definitely, without a shadow of a doubt, I can assure you they
22 are more intense. They are worse. I can attain it to a gas
23 explosion. That is how bad it is. You know, I keep my
24 property in good repair, but it is like I am sailing up the
25 river with it. You have got cracks in the floor and your

1 windows are constantly dirty. It is a nightmare.

2 As I say, for my children, their inheritance, will
3 I ever sell this property? I tell you now I would never buy a
4 house here now. I have been here 14 years and I have been a
5 member of Pontypridd community for 50 years. I used to live
6 in Trallwn. I came here to live and it was a lovely place.
7 Not now. It is not a good place to live.

8 As I say, I could carry on and on, but thank you for
9 hearing me out. I am asking the Committee to help us now. We
10 need the Committee to help us here, to try and get some sort
11 of normal living here because at the moment it is not. Every
12 week, which day, what is going to happen, if you are in work,
13 out of work, you just do not know. As I say, I could go on,
14 but I think you, hopefully, you have got my point, and I am
15 asking the Committee to please help the community of Glyncoch.
16 Thank you very much for listening.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you for that, Mrs. Griffiths.

18 MS. GRIFFITHS: Thank you.

19 THE CHAIR: The next person I will call in is Councillor Simon
20 Pritchard, who is on objector, speaking on behalf of
21 Pontypridd Town Council.

22 COUNCILLOR PRITCHARD: Thank you, Chair. Good afternoon,
23 Councillors. I am here as leader of Pontypridd Town Council
24 to echo what Mrs. Griffiths has just said, really, and to
25 really convey the strength of feeling across our communities

1 in relation to the quarry.

2 Now, I know planning is not about the court of public
3 opinion and I do not think for a second that that is your role
4 here, I know, but across our communities, Cilfynydd, Trallwn,
5 Glyncoch, Graigwen, I have had so many representations from
6 members of our communities and I have not had one that has
7 been positive.

8 Now again, I can see that that is almost besides the
9 point to a certain degree, but I think the issue that
10 Mrs. Griffiths just stressed then in terms of what it is like
11 living there and the fact they can see an end to this coming
12 -- people have lived in these properties and they could see a
13 time when this was ending -- now, there might be a reserve
14 that is still there, but that does not impact those residents
15 who are living in these conditions day by day, month by month,
16 and seeing light at the end of the tunnel. In terms of
17 fairness and justice, I think the biggest issue here is this
18 application for a significant extension at the time when the
19 LDP is being reviewed, the Welsh government are looking at
20 issues of the wellbeing of future generations, and whether
21 this is appropriate at this time. I would strongly ask the
22 Committee to consider those matters when they are making this
23 decision.

24 Now, yes, I can see that there is logic to the original
25 application being extended for that land bank; I absolutely

1 can see that. But for the people living and suffering -- and
2 there really is suffering, there is significant dust that
3 absolutely does impact, I have seen it myself in Glyncoch.
4 There is the blasts that anecdotally people widely say what
5 Mrs. Griffiths has just said, that they are louder than they
6 were before. There is the fact that the blasts are not timed,
7 as they have said they are going to be timed. So they come as
8 a shock even when people are warned in advance. There is the
9 significant traffic down Berw Road and the impact that has
10 both on the community there, in terms of pollution and does
11 that impact on people getting out of Glyncoch and Ynysybwll.

12 Now, there is a huge number of issues that will impact
13 in the communities here, and very little local benefit, very,
14 very little local benefit. The gentleman from Hanson talked
15 about employment, et cetera. They are not a local benefit and
16 I understand there is a national strategic importance to this
17 material. But for fairness, for the communities who have been
18 impacted by this and who could see light at the end of the
19 tunnel I would ask members not to agree this extension.

20 Thank you very much, Councillors and Chair.

21 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Pritchard.

22 Before I move on to members of the planning committee
23 and members of Rhondda Cynon Taf council who are not members
24 of the planning committee, I go to Mr. Jenkins to see if he
25 would like a right of reply to that.

1 MR. JENKINS: Yes. Thank you. I will make just a couple of
2 comments. Having listened to the objectors, I mean, the one
3 thing I think I would quite like to get across is just a bit
4 of perspective, really. The quarry has been in operation for
5 well over 100 years and the quarry development scheme itself
6 has been approved by RCT. All that is now being requested is
7 an additional time period to complete the approved
8 development. I understand that there are issues with
9 quarries, but that is the case with all quarries. All
10 quarries will give rise to some degree of environmental
11 effects and that is inevitable given the nature of the
12 operations involved. But we need quarries; we need the
13 aggregate from quarries. It is the essential raw material in
14 all the construction projects that are undertaken: houses,
15 schools, hospitals, road maintenance, they all require
16 aggregate. So, it is an inevitability that you cannot have
17 one without the other.

18 The policy requirement, the RCT policy requirement, is
19 to ensure that the effects of quarrying are minimised and
20 I think that is the case here with the detail 40 plus planning
21 conditions which are in place at the quarry; they are designed
22 to minimise the effects. I think we all have to recognise
23 that they cannot be eliminated.

24 I think in terms of some of the specific points raised,
25 we have had correspondence with Mr. Hervey in terms of the

1 application site boundary. That boundary is really a
2 historical quirk of a red line boundary that dates back to the
3 late 1940s. But because of the administrative issues with the
4 application, the red line boundary cannot be changed as part
5 of a time limit extension application. But we have emphasised
6 to Mr. Hervey that there is absolutely no intention to quarry
7 anywhere near his property and I would like to think that a
8 good conveyancing solicitor would appreciate that.

9 In terms of blasting, again, blasting is an inevitable
10 consequence of mineral extraction, but blast vibration limits
11 are set, based upon government advice and limits. All blasts
12 are monitored at the quarry, and all blasts have been shown to
13 comply with the blast vibration, ground vibration limits which
14 have been set.

15 Similarly for noise, the noise limits have been
16 monitored since 2013, and on all occasions the surveys have
17 confirmed that the noise is complying with the current limits,
18 and that is also the case with air quality.

19 Air quality is monitored, it is shown to be well below
20 the air quality standards which are set to protect public
21 health. You will note from the committee report that no
22 objections have been raised by the environmental health
23 officer and I think importantly no objections have been raised
24 by the specialist independent consultees responsible for this
25 issue, Cwm Taf Health Board and Public Health Wales, who have

1 confirmed that (in their words) there are no grounds for
2 objection based upon public health consideration.

3 So, I will end on that and just commend that advice to
4 you in considering this application.

5 THE CHAIR: Thank you for that, Mr. Jenkins. Council Powderhill
6 you have your hand up.

7 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: Yes. Simon Pritchard is leader of the
8 town council and, as you will be aware, I am a member of
9 Pontypridd Town Council. So, I think it would be appropriate
10 that I do declare an interest.

11 THE CHAIR: Okay.

12 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: However, I have never ever discussed this
13 or any other planning application within the bounds of the
14 town council. I have always left. So, on that basis I would
15 say it is not prejudicial, it is purely personal.

16 THE CHAIR: Okay.

17 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: Can you check that is okay with the legal
18 officer, please?

19 THE CHAIR: Yes, Mr. Humphreys.

20 MR. HUMPHREYS: Yes, I can confirm that sounds perfectly
21 acceptable. Thank you.

22 THE CHAIR: Thank you.

23 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: Thank you, Chair.

24 THE CHAIR: Okay. I will now move on to non-members of committee.

25 I will go first to Councillor Fychan.

1 COUNCILLOR FYCHAN: Thank you very much. Thank you for the
2 opportunity to address the committee. Previously we have
3 discussed expanding the quarry itself and I will not rehearse
4 the same arguments, but I think that there are some points
5 I would like to raise.

6 First of all, I would ask with Mr. Jenkins' comments at
7 what cost do we extend the life of the quarry? Do we ignore
8 the voices of residents, their experiences, because people who
9 do not live in that community do not think there is an impact
10 or that the levels currently set in law are not met? We know
11 that Wales desperately needs a clean air Act and one has been
12 promised by Welsh government. It is not in place yet, but we
13 know also that the levels would be different once that Act is
14 in place and that is likely to happen if Welsh government
15 commits, as they have done so, within the next year. That
16 would mean those considerations would be different and
17 therefore the report's findings would be different.

18 I would also like to share with the committee my
19 experience as a local member. As mentioned by Councillor
20 Pritchard, I represent Pontypridd Town ward and I receive a
21 number of complaints from residents there about the blasting.
22 Once such instance was on 13th July this year and I contacted
23 the Director of Planning and Planning Services after receiving
24 a number of complaints and also seven complaints from
25 residents in Glyncoch, which they cited to me genuine terror

1 at the blast on that day that had an impact -- and I know this
2 is being submitted by Councillor Williams -- about the impact
3 on their properties.

4 I asked in that e-mail, which was received by planning
5 and acknowledged, for urgent attention to this matter and an
6 update on the planned course of action given that we knew this
7 application was pending. I am yet to receive an update from
8 anyone in RCT council.

9 This is what residents tell me all the time, that when
10 there is a breach of the current planning conditions and those
11 are reported, they do not receive a response or no action is
12 taken. Therefore, we are led to believe that for six years,
13 yes, these planning conditions are there, but if they are not
14 being adhered to at present then how are we supposed to
15 reassure residents that these will be adhered to?

16 I am also concerned that RCT do not seem to be taking
17 these complaints seriously or responding to complaints when
18 there seems to be a breach. They may be responding but not to
19 receive an update as the council has been able to respond to
20 those complainants is indeed worrying.

21 There have been a number of complaints since then as
22 well with blasting creating genuine terror. That is a matter
23 for you to consider in terms of how you feel as a committee
24 about our role in adhering to the planning conditions.

25 We have previously mentioned as well the Future

1 Generations Act, and as I referenced the clean air Act is
2 something that is desperately needed in Wales. There has been
3 evidence in terms of impact of poor health on residents in
4 Glyncoch in particular and luckily we do now realise that
5 people do have a right to clean air, they do have a right to
6 not be impacted by these developments. I am hugely concerned
7 to see the report itself reference the economic need that
8 seems to override every other consideration.

9 Now, I know our hands are still tied as an authority in
10 terms of some of the planning regulations that have not
11 actually been rewritten to reflect the Future Generations Act.
12 But we have acknowledged that Act at the beginning of this
13 meeting. Everyone acknowledged it. If we are serious about
14 the Future Generations Act and not as a tick box exercise,
15 then surely the views of people like Mrs. Griffiths must be
16 listened to. Her genuine reasons there, asking us to be there
17 and feel it and live that experience. We cannot ignore that
18 voice. If we are serious about her children, grandchildren,
19 future generations, we saw previously -- I am sure if the
20 schools were still, it was not the school holidays we may have
21 heard from pupils again, as we did previously, about their own
22 experiences. Please remember those children that asked us to
23 think about them as well.

24 I would urge the committee, it is six years perhaps for
25 the quarry, but it is six years of hell for those residents

1 and I think we have a duty to listen to them and to stop the
2 quarrying because things are different now, we know better.
3 Just because we approved this in the past does not mean it has
4 to continue for another six years.

5 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you for that, Councillor Fychan. I now
6 go to Councillor Mike Powell.

7 COUNCILLOR POWELL: Thank you, Chair, thank you for allowing me to
8 speak today.

9 That was an exceptionally powerful argument from
10 Councillor Fychan, and we also had a reasoned and passionate
11 argument by Councillor Simon Pritchard from Pontypridd Town
12 Council. I am actually also a Community Councillor of
13 Pontypridd Town Council for the Trallwn ward. I have known
14 this quarry for all of my life. I was a child in Cilfynydd,
15 we would hear the blast and see the dust rising from the
16 quarry when I was a child, what, 55 years ago. I have had
17 complaints from residents in Cilfynydd from Trallwn, from
18 Glyncoch Ynysybwl, from Pontypridd Town, and we get these not
19 just because you know individually, I think it has been quite
20 a few residents contacted us because of their concerns and we
21 have heard from Mrs. Davies. We are going to take those on
22 board.

23 Now, when I was a child, as I said, you could hear the
24 blast, you could feel the blast, you could see the dust
25 rising. I have actually went and parked up on Cilfynydd

1 common a few months back and I was unfortunate enough to
2 witness a blast and watch the dust gradually covering over
3 Glyncoch and on towards Coed-y-Cwm.

4 Now, if you are actually close to that you would not
5 actually see it, because you would be enveloped by it, you
6 would not notice it. But from Cilfynydd you could see the
7 dust coming across, and there is no way that is not harmful.
8 When we look at the last, well the last paragraph on
9 Recommendations on page 2: "On balance it is concluded that
10 there is an overriding economic need for the mineral which is
11 not outweighed by any potentially environmental and amenity
12 issues."

13 That is absolutely nonsense. That is an officer writing
14 something up in the office on their desk. That is not what we
15 see in Pontypridd. That is not what people see in Glyncoch
16 Ynysybwl or in Cilfynydd. They actually daily, yes, daily,
17 have to put up with it. We have the lorries which are
18 actually coming down Berw Road causing no end of damage to
19 that. They park up in my ward from seven o'clock in the
20 morning until the authority -- until the quarry opens and then
21 you will have convoys of lorries going over the Victoria
22 Bridge, (unclear) onwards up into the quarry; and they then
23 come back down.

24 When you do a simple desktop arithmetic, 3 million
25 tonnes over eight years is 412,500 tonnes a year. Take 260

1 days as the working year, that is 10,300 lorries to shift
2 that, over 260 days, that is 40 lorries per day, 40 up and 40
3 back down. The Highways Officer, I am sure they should
4 have -- I have not seen the report, but they should have noted
5 the damage that is done to Berw Road itself by these vehicles.
6 We have got 44-tonne lorries on that road. They actually go
7 over a 40-tonne weight limit bridge to actually get from the
8 quarry to Pontypridd. Up on to the A470. We have no end of
9 problems with dust, also the dust off the brakes, the asbestos
10 coming off it, the fumes coming off the lorries themselves,
11 the noise pollution, and on and on and on it goes.

12 We do not see an economic benefit to that, and when we
13 talk about the national economy, the cost is -- we have to
14 look at the growth of the economy nationally. Well, are we
15 talking nationally Wales, are we talking nationally UK?
16 Because there is a moratorium on road building in Wales until
17 we have carried out the review in Welsh Assembly. That
18 probably, if it is the case and the moratorium is there, this
19 eight years is probably going to go to another four or five
20 years, because as Mr. Jenkins said, they have not been mining
21 the stone because of economic downturns. Well, it looks like
22 we are going to have another economic downturn.

23 With regards to the number of people who are employed,
24 we are all aware of the national shortage of lorry drivers, so
25 I do not think if this application was to be refused those

1 hauliers would be without a job, because instead of shifting
2 stone they will be shifting food around the country, which
3 I am sure we would all agree is much more beneficial to the
4 national economy for the nation to be able to eat rather than
5 to have stones to look at or use.

6 THE CHAIR: Councillor Powell, you are coming up to your five
7 minutes.

8 COUNCILLOR POWELL: Yes, Madam Chair, I am timing myself.

9 What I was going to suggest, Madam Chair, do not make a
10 decision today, but actually go and have a proper site visit.
11 You know, a proper site visit along the route from Cilfynydd
12 when there is a blast on and actually in the quarry itself.
13 Other than that, if you decide not to do it, I would ask that
14 you actually refuse the application, Madam Chair. Thank you
15 very much.

16 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Powell. Right. I will now go
17 over to Mr. Bailey then for the presentation. .

18 MR. BAILEY: Sorry, Chair, does Councillor Williams want to
19 address?

20 THE CHAIR: I was going to call Councillor Williams in as part of
21 the committee and then he could leave. No, because he has
22 declared a prejudicial interest. Sorry, Councillor Williams,
23 I do apologise to you for that.

24 COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS: Thank you very much, Chair. I do not intend
25 to go over what has been said in previous meetings in respect

1 of the development of the quarry, but I will touch on a few
2 things that I think are relevant to this application. I am
3 extremely disappointed at both Public Health Wales and Cwn Taf
4 Health Board to consider there are no problems with the air
5 quality in Glyncoch, which seems to contradict previous
6 letters submitted to this committee by a very eminent general
7 practitioner who says completely the opposite. They also say
8 in his submission that it is crucial that continued monitoring
9 and introduction of a dust management plan.

10 The question I need to ask you is, if there is no
11 problem with air quality why have we got to do that?

12 He also says that the local air quality is compliant
13 with the relevant PM10 and UKO levels, they fail to mention
14 anything about PM2.5 levels, but we do not monitor them.
15 PM2.5 is the dust particles you cannot see. The photographs
16 I submitted to Planning from locations outside Glyncoch shows
17 at the time the estate was shrouded with a thick level of
18 dust. My own solar panels show a build up of dust, what the
19 build up of dust looks like after a few days.

20 The lockdown as a result of Covid has -- sorry. The
21 lockdown as a result of Covid has resulted in a number of
22 complaints being made to me from residents who now find
23 themselves having to work from home and not previously
24 experiencing the blasting. One irate resident came to my home
25 following the last blast, he was not very impressed, first of

1 all (i.e., very vocal to myself), but he was not very
2 impressed what the authority are doing to solve the problems.

3 The calls continue following every blast. The last one
4 was horrendous. As always the answer when we complain about
5 it is "We are within permitted limits". I am sorry, that is
6 not good enough. If the current levels cause problems, then
7 they should be reduced. Again, photographs I have submitted
8 show damage to properties.

9 The report goes on to say that high polished stone is
10 plentiful in Wales. That contradicts what the officers, the
11 gentleman said. There is no shortage of supply. The Welsh
12 government has already said there will be no new road building
13 in Wales for the foreseeable future. There are other quarries
14 within the Hanson Group, some of them are already mothballed
15 and could be used, the stone could be used to fill our
16 shortfall.

17 My concerns are expressed as follows in the report, that
18 it says this is exposed to persistent levels of potential
19 nuisance dust PM10s, the effects can go beyond the obvious
20 nuisance levels and increase anxiety. Without doubt I am now
21 seeing mental health issues in Glyncoch for the first time as
22 a result of anxiety around blasting, damage to properties and
23 residents being frightened following blasting. I witnessed
24 some of the people physically shaking. The application in my
25 opinion contradicts policy AW10, the Health and Wellbeing Act,

1 the Future Generations Act and the Air Quality Act (Wales).

2 We see the Welsh government proposing to set charges on
3 the A470 because of the air pollution. Glyncoch has had that
4 issue for decades. Even back in the 1970s, the Environmental
5 Health Officer at that time was on record as saying dust from
6 blasting are the main area of complaints from residents of
7 Glyncoch. 50 years ago. I could go on to mention about the
8 traffic problems causing issues, but I am sure my colleagues
9 have and will say more things on that.

10 There has been no end. There has to be an end to
11 everything. In the case of the quarry, the time is now. Can
12 I passionately ask members of the planning committee, please
13 consider the impact this application will have on the
14 residents of Glyncoch and the surrounding areas and refuse the
15 application for the health and well-being of this community.

16 Thank you, Chair.

17 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Williams. I will wait now for
18 Councillor Williams to leave the meeting and then I will ask
19 Mr. Bailey to start the presentation. Okay. Mr. Bailey.

20 MR. BAILEY: Thank you, Chair. I have a number of late letters
21 just to refer to, if I may, before starting the presentation
22 as such. We have 14 late letters in total, Chair. The first
23 of which is from Senedd member Vicky Howells, she states she
24 is writing to object to the planning application submitted by
25 Hanson in respect of their application for an extension to

1 Craig Yr Hesg quarry.

2 Just to clarify the point, the term "extension" is the
3 term to extend the life of the quarry rather than the physical
4 extension of the quarry in this particular case.

5 "Since I was first elected in 2016 I have received
6 numerous representation from local residents who are at their
7 wits end with the noise and disruption caused by the blasting,
8 I am told that the vibrations from the blast can be heard
9 throughout the nearby villages with residents informing me of
10 dust, debris and their walls shaking as a result. If the
11 extension to the quarry is approved it will have a detrimental
12 effect not only on the properties but also the health and
13 well-being of residents for many years to come, and this is
14 not acceptable. Residents tell me they are constantly
15 battling against HGVs depositing dust and debris on the
16 highway, which has increased substantially and is affecting
17 their daily living.

18 "My objections are based on the following concerns:
19 proximity to residential properties, dust and debris causing
20 health concerns, excessive noise and impact from blasting and
21 the consequent vibrations, impact to the highways and
22 consequent effect on residents. With over 400 members of the
23 community represented on the Hanson Quarry Expansion
24 Opposition Action Group, the strength of feeling locally is
25 well represented, and I am fully supportive of their mission.

1 However, should the committee be minded to approve this
2 application, I ask consideration be given to a number of
3 restrictions to enable the community to live peacefully.
4 I wish to request and recommend the following are put in place
5 if planning is approved.

6 "First of all, that restrictions are in place and
7 monitored regarding the times and nature of any blasting.
8 Revisit the existing planning consent to recognise the close
9 proximity to residential properties. Reduce the level of dust
10 emission by implementing monitoring of dust levels. Finally,
11 implement restrictions on waiting lorries and monitor wheel
12 washing. I trust you will give due consideration to all my
13 comments and suggestions, and that the health and well-being
14 of residents who have suffered so much over the years will
15 also be considered above the need to extract from the quarry."

16 The other 13 letters that we received, Chair, do not
17 raise any new issues as such that are not already covered in
18 the extensive reporting of concerns raised within the report,
19 other than one concern, which really has no relevance to this
20 particular site, which references the working practices of the
21 applicant company Hanson's at the quarry in the West Bank of
22 Gaza.

23 The other concerns which I will briefly summarise, as
24 I say, they are already covered, but these are that Hanson are
25 a German-owned company, are not being held responsible for

1 their actions. Hanson do not notify the residents when blasts
2 will take place. Damage to property as a consequence of the
3 blasting. HGVs on Berw Road and the risk to pedestrians and
4 other road users and the damage to the surface of the road,
5 making it unsafe. Adverse impacts on health, principally
6 brought about by dust. Remove the noise and dust nuisance
7 which scares the young and the elderly and the fact that in
8 the view of residents blasts are getting stronger and louder.

9 That is the late letters that we have had in respect of
10 the application, Chair.

11 Perhaps if we can go to the presentation. Just to
12 clarify to members, this is a section 73 application and has
13 been submitted to extend the operational life of the quarry
14 for a further six-year period. So that is six years beyond
15 the current date of 31st December 2022, which is when mineral
16 extraction from the quarry should cease. So, the conditions
17 that are outlined on page 12 of the report in front of
18 members, conditions 1, 2, 3, 4, 45 and 46, the application
19 seeks to knock all those dates on by a period of six years.

20 It is important to recognise, I think, that this
21 application relates to the existing operational quarry and it
22 is a different application to that which came before committee
23 last year, which sought to physically extend the quarry and to
24 extract a further 10 million tonnes from the site up to a
25 period until 2047. So that application, as members will be

1 well aware, was refused by this committee last July and that
2 is subject of an appeal which has been lodged with the
3 Planning Inspectorate and currently sits with the Planning
4 Inspectorate. So, this application, just so that members are
5 eminently clear, is not to physically extend the quarry but to
6 extend its operational life within the confines of the
7 existing permission by a period of six years.

8 As Mr. Jenkins outlined in his five minutes, it was
9 estimated at the end of December 2020 that the site had a
10 reserve of 3.3 million tonnes of rock remaining within the
11 quarry; and with an average output of approximately 400,000
12 tonnes per annum, that gives a further life, potential life to
13 the quarry of eight years, which gives us the date of
14 31st December 2028, which is the date now sought by this
15 application.

16 It is clearly recognised that this is a sensitive site
17 and a sensitive application, as has been evidenced both by the
18 speakers today and also by the volume and nature of objections
19 received, not only to this application but also as a
20 consequence of blasting incidents that have occurred over the
21 last, particularly over the last 18 months or two years or so.

22 In terms of policy, the over-arching principles in terms
23 of mineral applications are set out within Planning Policy
24 Wales 11 and Mineral TAN Number 1. The objective set out in
25 those documents is to ensure that the mineral supply is

1 managed in a sustainable way, so that the best balance is
2 struck between environmental, economic and social
3 considerations and making sure that any environmental and
4 amenity impacts of extraction are capped to a level that
5 avoids causing any demonstrable harm.

6 There is a recognition clearly that society needs a
7 range of minerals, and that is evidenced within the Council's
8 own local development plan at Policy CS10, which has been
9 referred to by the speakers. That policy indicates that the
10 council will seek to provide a ten-year supply. In addition,
11 the council is also part of an amalgamation of authorities
12 signed up to the Regional Technical Statement, and that is the
13 Regional Provision of Minerals, and that currently
14 demonstrates that we at the moment already have a shortfall
15 within our contribution to that overall target. So, clearly,
16 any reduction at the Craig Yr Hesg site would further
17 exacerbate that provision that we, as a council, should be
18 providing.

19 As is evident from the speakers today, Chair, and from
20 the correspondence we have received over a period of time and
21 to the previous application, residents of Glyncoch and wider
22 areas, Cilfynydd and parts of Pontypridd have raised concerns
23 in terms of dust and air quality.

24 I would point out that as part of the consultation for
25 the application, we have consulted with our colleagues in

1 Public Health and I am aware there are representative officers
2 from that section who have joined us today. Public Health
3 Wales and Cwn Taf Health Authority, and none of those bodies
4 have raised an objection to the application and to the
5 extension of extraction for a further six-year period; albeit
6 all three of those have made it clear that further air
7 monitoring, air quality monitoring would need to take place.

8 As part of the recommendation for approval, members will
9 have noted that is subject to a section 106 agreement and that
10 is to seek a contribution from the applicant towards RCT's
11 costs of undertaking that air quality monitoring.

12 In terms of the blasting, which again is another issue
13 which has been raised, at this point picking up on the comment
14 that Councillor Fychan made about the lack of a response to
15 her last e-mail, I am sorry to hear that, but if she can leave
16 that with me, I will ensure, Chair, that we look into that and
17 a response is provided to her. I apologise if a response has
18 not been forthcoming. I was not aware of that. In terms of
19 the blasting, we have, when we received the complaints about
20 the blasting, gone back to the quarry and the readings that
21 have been provided do demonstrate that they are within the
22 levels set down within the conditions of the existing
23 permissions. Those levels are set at a level which is
24 reflective of national guidance within mineral TAN 1 and, as I
25 say, the readings and the data provided show that there have

1 been no exceedances of those limits set down within the
2 consent.

3 In terms of the highway issues, again another issue that
4 has been raised throughout the presentations and the
5 objections received, Chair, no objection has been received
6 from our colleagues in Highways. I am sure members will have
7 picked up from the report that a request was made for a levy
8 of 5p per tonne coming out of the quarry to be charged and to
9 be secured via a legal agreement. The view of your officers
10 from a planning point of view is that that is more
11 appropriately dealt with under section 59 of the Highway Act,
12 which was the view that we put forward for the previous
13 application to physically extend the quarry. Ultimately, this
14 is not looking to take new material out of the quarry. It is
15 already a volume of material and resource that there has been
16 consented. It is extending that period. It is not new
17 material. So, overall, Chair, as the report indicates,
18 whilst acknowledging the concerns of the community of Glyncoch
19 and the wider areas of Pontypridd, we feel that the submission
20 does evidence the need for the resource and for the mineral
21 from this site. We feel that there is a justifiable reason to
22 provide that and that those impacts can be mitigated to a
23 level which is deemed to be acceptable and we feel that is
24 evidenced by the lack of any objection from the statutory
25 consultees. On that basis, Chair, the application is

1 recommended for approval, subject to a section 106 agreement.

2 One final point, Chair, in saying that is that there are
3 two minor amendments to the conditions presented in the report
4 and these relate to conditions 34 and 36. These are to make
5 sure that in respect of 34, the Wildlife Protection Plan is
6 actually provided in accordance with the relevant appendix
7 within the Environmental Statement, which is appendix 7.3, and
8 secondly, in respect of condition 36, that for clarity and
9 precision, the condition refers to the scheme as set out in
10 Appendix 11.6 of the Environmental Statement, as submitted
11 with the application. Thank you, Chair.

12 THE CHAIR: Okay. Thank you for that, Mr. Bailey. I have two
13 members who have indicated. I go first to Councillor Caple.

14 COUNCILLOR CAPLE: Thank you, Chair. I have listened to the
15 objectors, as echoed by the leader of Pontypridd Town Council
16 and local members. In my view, my opinion, the pendulum has
17 swung from the economic need for quarrying the mineral to the
18 considerable detriment to potential environmental and amenity
19 issues. In this respect, I would refer members to page 23 and
20 the key principles to consider. In conclusion, I move to
21 refuse the application against officers' recommendation on the
22 grounds of detriment to amenity and wellbeing. That is all
23 I need to say, Chair.

24 THE CHAIR: Okay. Councillor Caple. Councillor Hughes?

25 COUNCILLOR HUGHES: Thank you, Chair. Yes, I just quote

1 Councillor Simon Pritchard, or certainly paraphrase anyway.
2 I think he said just because there are reserves does not mean
3 they should be removed. Whilst I appreciate that aggregate is
4 required, that should not be at the detriment to public
5 health.

6 I understand that the levels of pollution meet national
7 standards. I think what is clear, however, is that there are
8 also mental health issues at play here and I am not sure that
9 they have necessarily been measured. Mr. Jenkins stated in
10 his response that there has been quarrying at this site for
11 well over 100 years. I would suggest that this is long enough
12 and I will second Councillor Caple's motion.

13 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Hughes. Councillor Powderhill?

14 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: Thank you, Chair. I was born in Ynysybwl.

15 I grew up in Ynysybwl. I have lived in Pontypridd for quite a
16 number of years so I know this site very, very well.

17 I actually understand everything put forward by the agent.
18 Yes, there is a need, but as was said both by Councillor Caple
19 and Councillor Hughes and the objectors, at what cost?

20 The people of Glyncoch have to bear the burden that has
21 been put on their shoulders and they have been asked to carry
22 that load for more years. Let us be honest, they have carried
23 their share of the burden for long enough. The time has to
24 end at some point. Why make their lives living hell simply
25 for economic needs? So, I disagree. There will be quarries

1 elsewhere and there will be ways of removing it on better
2 structured roads, but the people of Ynysybwl suffer terribly
3 with the traffic and the people of Glyncoch have to live with
4 the blasting.

5 If this was a new application, we would be saying no.
6 The fact that it is there and has survived these number of
7 years, I think the applicant should put hand on heart and say,
8 "Glyncoch, you have done enough. Thanks for what you have
9 done for us." So, I am going to back the refusal and for
10 those reasons, that again, the loss of the amenity to me is a
11 loss too great. So, yes, I am going to go for refusal, Chair.
12 Thank you.

13 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Powderhill. Council Jarman?

14 COUNCILLOR JARMAN: Thank you, Chair. If I could just carry on
15 where the previous two speakers have left off, Councillor
16 Hughes says there has been a quarry there now over 100 years.
17 This quarry was consented 172 years ago, 1949, so we are fast
18 approaching two centuries, not one.

19 The other point that Councillor Powderhill made was that
20 if this was a new application, we would be saying no. I only
21 wish I could share his optimism because this Council has done
22 a deal with Hanson to sell them land, subject to the appeal
23 being granted, to mine and quarry a further 10 million tonnes
24 of sandstone, subject to the inspector coming out in favour of
25 Hanson. So, you know, it is not right. If this Council had

1 any sense of moral responsibility, it would refuse to sell
2 that land to Hanson to enable that future 10 million tonnes of
3 sandstone on the site to be mined. I felt I had to say that
4 because it needed to be said.

5 On this particular application, Chair, I view this as
6 an act of desperation by Hanson. The application is a stopgap
7 in anticipation of the inspector coming down in their favour
8 when the other application we refused is determined. So this
9 is a stopgap. The deal to sell Hanson the land was in 2014.
10 2022 was eight years away from that date. They were hoping
11 that all of that could have been done and dusted so that the
12 consent they have presently would be irrelevant because they
13 would have a new consent to mine a further 10 million tonnes
14 as well as that which remains on the site. That is the
15 reality of the situation and let us be adult enough to
16 acknowledge that.

17 So the people in this area are faced with the
18 possibility of decades more of misery from this site.
19 I listened intently to the local residents and I share their
20 concern. I, like you, Chair, have lived in the shadow of an
21 industrial site where dust was, if nothing else, the most
22 debilitating thing that local residents had to cope with.
23 I am surprised at the Health Board and Public Health not
24 acknowledging. It may not be that local residents can breathe
25 in all of this dust, but it is in their every living hour, on

1 their furniture, on their laundry, and it is debilitating and
2 it has got an effect on people's mental health and wellbeing.
3 Councillor Fychan was quite right to say that we need a Clean
4 Air Act in Wales if only to rid us of the industrial misery
5 that these valleys have endured over so many years.

6 We have paid our price to society as communities in
7 relation to mineral extraction whether it is coal or
8 sandstone. We have nothing to apologise for. These people
9 living in Glyncoch and in close proximity have the right to
10 peace and quiet. I think that this application extending --
11 we have to be careful -- what we are doing is being asked to
12 extend the existing operation. Well, I think that that is
13 totally out of accord with the Wellbeing and Future
14 Generations Act. It is another -- how many years -- six years
15 of misery. I am not going to support anything that will cause
16 that.

17 Every elected person, it seems to me, in this area has
18 had representation, undeniable representation, cross-party,
19 and I think that not listening to the mood of the people and
20 the misery of the people, we would be not doing our job and
21 acknowledging that people do matter. However the Welsh
22 government tell us not to take too much notice of public
23 objections, how dare they? We must take notice of public
24 objections given the scale, the degree and the types of things
25 that are affecting people's everyday lives. Noise, dust,

1 misery, discomfort, mental health -- I do not know how much
2 more evidence we need to prove the case that this extension
3 should not be supported, Chair.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Jarman. 1949 is 72 years ago,
5 just for a point of clarity there. Councillor Grehan?

6 COUNCILLOR GREHAN: Thank you Chair. I'm going to speak in Welsh.

7 Mr Bailey said that we acknowledge the local people's
8 concerns. But we don't. The officers don't. They hear the
9 arguments, but they are not listening to them properly.

10 Their concerns are real. Every person, every
11 representative, every person that lives in the area and every
12 letter I've seen from local residents are all complaining
13 about the dust in the area.

14 The whole thing is outrageous because we are even
15 considering extending this scheme. We should close this when
16 the date ends next year by following the law of future
17 generations. We should say that local people and their health
18 are more important than a few extra years of getting this
19 sandstone. I will be objecting. Thank you.

20 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Grehan. I have got no other
21 members who have indicated that they wish to speak on this
22 item. So, just to recap, then, we have the motion that has
23 been seconded to refuse the application, which is Application
24 No: 21/0720, for the continuation of quarrying and related
25 operations at Craig Yr Hesg quarry, Berw Road, Pontypridd. So

1 I will go to the vote and I will take the roll call as is
2 usual. I go first to Councillor Bonetto.
3 COUNCILLOR BONETTO: I shall be going for refusal, Chair.
4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Councillor Bonetto. Council Caple?
5 COUNCILLOR CAPLE: Motion to refuse, Chair.
6 THE CHAIR: Councillor Grehan?
7 COUNCILLOR GREHAN: For the motion to refuse.
8 THE CHAIR: Councillor Hughes?
9 COUNCILLOR HUGHES: In line with the motion, Chair.
10 THE CHAIR: Councillor Jarman?
11 COUNCILLOR JARMAN: Refuse, Chair, and apologies for not being
12 very good at sums!
13 THE CHAIR: Councillor Lewis?
14 COUNCILLOR LEWIS: Refused, Chair.
15 THE CHAIR: Councillor Owen?
16 COUNCILLOR OWEN: Refused, Chair.
17 THE CHAIR: Councillor Powderhill?
18 COUNCILLOR POWDERHILL: Refused in line with the motion, Chair.
19 THE CHAIR: Councillor Julie Williams?
20 COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS: Refused, Chair.
21 THE CHAIR: Right, that is the vote concluded. I will hand over
22 to Mr. Humphreys to sum up, please.
23 MR. HUMPHREYS: Thank you, Chair. With this application, members
24 are minded to refuse the application for the extension of the
25 quarry as it is a detriment to the amenity and wellbeing of

1 the area and in line with procedures, the matters will be
2 reported back to another committee for the reasons for going
3 against, for members to determine those. Thank you, Chair.

4 THE CHAIR: Thank you, Mr. Humphreys. So that concludes
5 application item 5 on the agenda.

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