



**Planning application:** 9.7 hectare quarry extension (Area 8) eastward from the current working Area 7 to provide 4.9 million tonnes of magnesian limestone followed by restoration of the land with engineered fill from existing adjacent waste treatment facility.

**Location:** Went Edge Quarry, Went Edge Road, Kirk Smeaton, Selby,

**Reference:** NY/2019/0002/ENV

### ***Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Statement in Objection***

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust ask the planning committee to refuse planning permission for Went Edge Quarry extension due to the potentially significant impacts to a nationally designated site, Brockadale Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is partly owned and managed by the Trust.

We object to the application as we do not believe sufficient mitigation measures have been put in place to avoid significant deterioration of the site. Nor do we believe that the restoration scheme can enhance biodiversity in the short or long term, as there remains outstanding concerns over its feasibility and the ability of the S106 to secure this, particularly with the insufficient funds proposed.

In accordance with the Habitats Directive, national and local policies including SP 18, ENV 11, there is a requirement to safeguard these sites from inappropriate development.

Brockadale is designated for its ancient grassland and woodland habitats, areas which have been unchanged since the 1600's and are considered irreplaceable under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). 97% of such grassland has been lost in Britain since the 1930's.

As irreplaceable habitats, there must be consideration for indirect impacts with regards to national and local policy. The NPPF states that development resulting in loss or deterioration must be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy. This is further reflected in local policy ENV11. These criteria have not been fulfilled for the proposed quarry extension.

Ancient grassland and woodland habitats are also listed as Habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006), which puts further duty on public authorities to conserve biodiversity.

We have serious concerns about dust and hydrological impacts resulting in significant shifts in habitat composition and, ultimately, the loss of flora and fauna species which are rare both locally and nationally. This includes the impact of particles which are not visible to the naked eye. Despite our requests, the current mitigation strategies do not go far enough to provide confidence that such impacts will be avoided. No



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ecological monitoring has been undertaken in the past to verify the level of impacts which may occur from quarrying; however the quarry has been implicated by Natural England in a number of enforcement cases for damage to the SSSI.

Likely impacts are therefore very hard to predict, given the specialised nature of species sensitive to minimal changes. Research published in 2013 concluded that these habitats take over 150 years to recover from damage. The proposed restoration and S106, which still hold a number of errors and concerns over their viability, therefore cannot possibly compensate for these impacts and loss of rare species and habitats on site.

The impact of proposals on specific species has been outlined in detail by the Brockdale Friends of Group, who we fully support.

We therefore believe the proposals are not in accordance with European, National or Local legislation and policy, and impacts upon biodiversity are significant and irreversible. As a nationally recognised site of significant importance it is the duty of the local authority to protect these features and as such we strongly recommend that the application is refused.