

**Planning Consultation Response on behalf of
the Isles of Scilly AONB Joint Advisory Committee**

**Application for Determination by the Planning and Development Committee
on March 4th 2014**

P/14/004 Proposed Batching Plant Site, Parting Carn Lane, Parting Carn, St Mary's. Temporary use of agricultural land for use as a mobile batching plant and construction compound together with temporary residential accommodation for works associated with the upgrade of St Mary's Airport.

Context and Guiding Principles

Updating St Mary's Airport is an essential component of the infrastructure development plans designed to secure sustainable and resilient air transport links between Scilly and the mainland. While the presence of large-scale industrial machinery would normally be at odds with sympathetic management of Scilly's AONB environment, the long-term community benefits (e.g. residents' access to services and the future of tourism on the Islands), coupled with the temporary nature of the development, suggests that the common goal should be careful management of the batching plant in order to protect the long-term status of Scilly as an exceptional environment, sustainable community, and attractive tourist destination. In pursuit of the general principle of temporarily accommodating the batching plant within the AONB, the main issues raised in the AONB Partnership consultation response revolve around:

- *Risk management at all stages of the installation, operation and removal of the plant and associated infrastructure*
- *Restoration of the agricultural land following removal of the plant*

Risk Management

This section of the consultation response focuses on *factors* that could potentially threaten the AONB environment in either the short-term or long-term:

- Contamination (chemicals, noise and dust)
- Infrastructure management (water, sewage and waste)
- Transport
- Time-scales

This section also highlights the *features of the natural and historic environment* that require consideration and, where necessary, mitigation.

Contamination

In the event that consent is granted, it is recommended that planning conditions be attached to ensure the monitoring and, where necessary, the mitigation of threats posed by *chemicals* used in the batching process, as well as associated *dust* and *noise*. The AONB Partnership echoes Natural England advice on protecting water courses and land quality, including the features of the two neighbouring SSSIs:

Should the LPA be minded to grant planning permission Natural England advises that run-off and pollution control measures are secured via a suitably worded planning condition and should be adhered to during both construction and operation of the site

These conditions are required to ensure that the development, as submitted, will not impact upon the features of special interest for which Higher Moors & Porth Hellick Pool (St Mary's) & Lower Moors (St Mary's) SSSIs are notified
(Natural England Consultation Response, page 1, February 10th 2014)

Infrastructure Management (Waste, Water and Sewage)

In the event that planning consent is granted, planning conditions should establish the full details of waste, water and sewage management during both the construction and operation phases.

Transport

An appropriately worded planning condition should also confirm the transport management plan for movement of equipment, materials and people to and from the main landing points to the batching plant and then onwards to the airport.

Time-scales

As previously noted, the batching plant and associated works can only be temporarily accommodated in the AONB and Conservation Area. Therefore, planning conditions should clearly establish the timetable for installation, operation and removal of the plant and associated accommodation.

Features of the natural and historic environment

While the agricultural land has no significant ecological value, trees and hedges do require careful management. Works to trees and hedges should be carried out at times of the year and using methods that minimise impacts on mammals and birds. Removal of mature trees, especially elms, should also be avoided in order to maintain the character and habitat value of the AONB.

In accordance with historic environment advice from Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service, it is strongly recommended that an archaeological watching brief be a condition of any planning consent.

Restoration

On completion of the airport upgrade all equipment and materials relating to the batching plant and temporary accommodation should be removed from the site and, as importantly, either removed from the Islands, re-used on the Islands, or disposed of in an appropriate and responsible manner.

Following clearance of the site the agricultural land should be restored using the original topsoil removed during the installation phase. It is essential that the topsoil be retained in good condition and uncontaminated throughout the operational phase. Mixing topsoil with other materials (e.g. rubble, waste, sub-soil) would not constitute appropriate restitution of this agricultural land.

Field walls and hedges should also be restored to their original condition using appropriate materials and building techniques.