

Minutes of the Meeting of the
JURASSIC COAST PROJECT
WORKING GROUP held at the Town Hall
on **Thursday, 27th January 2005** at **11.00 a.m.**

Present:

Councillor A H Miller, Chairman	Town Mayor
Councillor H Agelink	Swanage Town Council
Councillor M Tyrer	Swanage Town Council
Mr A Leeson	Town Clerk
Mr C Suttle	J Suttle Swanage Quarries Ltd

1) **Introduction**

The Clerk outlined the reasons for the establishment of the Working Group and its Terms of Reference. It was noted that the Working Group would not be able to make any decisions and that ratification must be sought from the Council.

2) **General Discussion**

Councillor Miller gave an overview of the discussions that had taken place over the last 18 months and outlined the main attributes and areas of discussion as being:

- Exposed rock face – access all year
- Link to the quarry
- Restored tip
- Restored quarry
- Redundant recycling centre
- Two paddocks
- Badger set
- Old office building
- Flare (methane burning).

The Clerk highlighted that the Council had already agreed in principle to support the development of the site. Councillor Miller further outlined the possible developments at the site as being:

- A walkway could be arranged around the rock face so that the public could view the workings of an active quarry at the rear of the cutting shed
- Products could be viewed and sold
- The paddocks could be installed and these could provide points of interest with information boards
- The redundant recycling centre could be used as a car park.
- The restored tip area could be used as an overflow car park
- The badger set would need to be incorporated
- The redundant offices would act as a visitor centre

Councillor Miller also reported on an informal and productive meeting that had taken place with Mr Eyles, the owner of California Farm, which adjoins the quarry site and stated that a holistic approach to developing the area as an

attraction was being considered. The possibility of using the paddocks to house Mr Eyles' sheep and to sell farming by-products was mooted. It was also noted that Dorset Wildlife Trust had declared an interest to be included in developments in the site. Townsend Nature Reserve would also need to be involved to create a good overall attraction. The possibility of widening the scope of the Group to include Mr Eyles and Dorset Wildlife Trust was mooted however it was felt that at this initial period that the Group structure should remain unchanged.

Councillor Tyrer enquired as to the timescale for development. It was noted that the recycling centre had an agreement which would last for up to a further two years, with 2007 being mooted as a possible date for completion of the project.

Mr Suttle gave an overview of his position to date and events leading to the development of the site as a quarry and outlined the criteria for the granting of planning permission as:

- Restoring the area so that wildlife will repopulate
- Restoring the lower area and leaving the rock face exposed

Mr Suttle stated that there was previously an interest from geologists but foot and mouth had affected the number of visitors which was only just starting to recover. The main attraction of the quarry was highlighted as being the rock face which shows the Purbeck beds, mirroring those exposed on Durlston Bay, with the added facility for visitors of a tactile experience available all year round. Mr Suttle stated that there was approximately 12 years of quarrying remaining on the present site and that they would have to seek planning permission to extend the quarrying area after this time. As a result of this Mr Suttle further stated that he sees the business as moving towards one of a visitor attraction. The work to complete this attraction was viewed as a two phase process. The phases were outlined as:-

Phase One

- Complete the restoration which would allow for greater public access
- Facilitate the footpath between entry to the site and STC land
- Upgrade road for emergency vehicle access
- Construct monolithic feature and erect story boards (subject to planning permission)

Phase Two

- Opening up of the workshop so that the public can view working with stone
- The movement of business to the production of goods
- If this is a gradual change over then this will fit in with the longevity of the quarry.

Mr Suttle further outlined that he required security from the Council with regards to access rights and highlighted the benefits of providing a visitor attraction. It was noted that J Suttle Swanage Quarries Ltd currently has a joint access agreement with the Town Council and makes an annual contribution towards the maintenance costs.

The Working Group discussed several options available to both parties and their requirements. Mr Suttle outlined his contribution to the site as offering access to a geological site, the construction of a stone feature, construction of a crushed stone footpath and construction of an access road. In return Mr Suttle was requesting from the Council and extension of the right of way over Swanage Town Council land, equal to the right of access to the geological rock face being offered. The possibility of entering into joint ownership and land swap were mooted however after a lengthy discussion it was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Tyrer and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**:

That Mr Suttle requests an extension of his current right of access to be extended from 14 years to 99 years and that the Council in return is granted access to the geological rock face for an equal length of time.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm.
