

Gravel Pit Update - Planning for Action

The planning application has still not arrived and we are now being told it should be submitted by the end of February. This update focuses on the planning process, what will happen once the application is submitted, and how the community can influence the process.

OCC has a target of deciding on planning applications within 13 weeks from submission. However, for big complex applications like a new gravel pit the overall process usually takes quite a bit longer. Further work is invariably required to respond to concerns raised about the proposal. It can take more than a year to get a decision but it is at the start of the process where community involvement is crucial.

OCC allows 3 weeks from submission for community input to a planning application. Given the demonstrable scale of community concern about the gravel pit we have asked for an extension to this consultation period, which will hopefully stretch it to 5 weeks. Either way, the community has a very short time scale in which to register its concerns. The quality and quantity of the community responses in this period really makes a difference and helps set the agenda and tone for assessing the planning application.

What can you do?

Firstly, please do NOT write to OCC until the official consultation period is open otherwise your input will be wasted.

Bachport will make it as easy as possible for you to object to this proposal. When the application is submitted we will let everyone know who to contact, how and when. We will also provide you with the key arguments for objecting. Pro-forma letters don't get read so we will provide the arguments for you to express in your own words.

Our goal is to make sure as many people as possible who are concerned about the gravel pit express their concerns to OCC. Your input really will make a difference.

Bachport and its professional advisors will make the detailed case for rejecting this planning proposal. We have a strong case – a new gravel pit is not needed, it is in the wrong place and there are better alternative sites – and with strong community support we can defeat this application.

We have ~750 registered supporters and the support of 4 parish councils. However, we still come across villagers who are not aware of the impending threat of a gravel pit. It will also affect anyone who passes through our community - driving to work, walking the Thames footpath, fishing on the river bank. Therefore, could you please encourage your neighbours, friends and work colleagues to register at <http://bachport.uk/> today. It only takes 30 seconds. Your parish needs you!