

**FAO Rob Smith**  
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NYMNP

17/07/2018

**Date:** 17 July 2018

**Our ref:** 50303/04/HS/VV/16035896v4

**Your ref:** NYM/2017/0505/MEIA

Dear Mr Smith

**North York Moors: Woodsmith Mine - Application for Non Material Amendments to Planning Permission NYM/2017/0505/MEIA**

On behalf of our client, Sirius Minerals, Lichfields is pleased to submit this application for a non material amendment (NMA) to planning permission NYM/2017/0505/MEIA. The proposed non-material amendment relates to the proposed reintroduction of a ventilation shaft and associated below-ground structures at Woodsmith Mine.

The submission of this NMA follows our discussions on 19 April 2018 during which we outlined the limited scope of changes being brought forward.

**Background**

On 19 October 2015, the NYMNP granted planning permission for the *“Winning and working of polyhalite by underground methods including the construction of a minehead at Dove's Nest Farm involving access, maintenance and ventilation shafts, the landforming of associated spoil, the construction of buildings, access roads, car parking and helicopter landing site, attenuation ponds, landscaping, restoration and aftercare and associated works. In addition, the construction of an underground tunnel between Doves Nest Farm and land at Wilton that links to the mine below ground, comprising 1 no. shaft at Doves Nest Farm, 3 no. intermediate access shaft sites, each with associated landforming of associated spoil, the construction of buildings, access roads and car parking, landscaping, restoration and aftercare, and the construction of a tunnel portal at Wilton comprising buildings, landforming of spoil and associated works”* (Council Reference NYM/2014/0676/MEIA).

NYM/2014/0676/MEIA was approved subject to 95 planning conditions and a Section 106 Agreement.

On 6 February 2017, the NYMNP granted planning permission for the *“Variation of Condition 5 of planning permission NYM/2014/0676/MEIA to allow minor material amendments relating to that part of the development at the Woodsmith Mine site (formerly known as Doves Nest Farm and Haxby Plantation), including; re-design of foreshafts and shaft construction methodology, changes to building layout and shaft access arrangements, revisions to construction and operational shaft platform levels, revisions to location and layout of surface water attenuation ponds, revisions to groundwater management*

arrangements and amendments to internal access arrangements” (Council Reference NYM/2017/0505/MEIA).

The amended scheme (NYM/2017/0505/MEIA) was approved subject to 98 planning conditions and a deed of variation to the originally approved Section 106 Agreement. The submission seeks a non-material amendment to this scheme.

## Proposals

As discussed at our meeting, following the input of new site contractors, it has become apparent that there is a design preference to reinstate the originally proposed ventilation shaft, connecting tunnel and underground chamber at Woodsmith Mine.

This element of the scheme, was part of the original approved planning application proposals at Woodsmith Mine (ref. no. NYM/2014/0676/MEIA). Alternative ventilation arrangements were then promoted within the recent Section 73 application (s73) (ref no. NYM/2017/0505/MEIA). However, the s73 design solution to accommodate the ventilation equipment within the service shaft headframe chamber is no longer preferred. As an alternative, the dedicated ventilation shaft and below-ground chamber simplifies the engineering of the project and has the potential to shorten construction programmes, whilst enabling the earlier ventilation of the mine. Hence there is a desire to revert to the original proposal, with a ventilation shaft and connection tunnel, along with an underground chamber to accommodate the necessary ventilation equipment.

No above-ground changes to the s73 approved scheme are proposed, other than a need to amend the excavation volumes arising at the site associated with the increased below-ground works. It is estimated that as a result of the requirement to reinstate the ventilation shaft, excavation volumes at Woodsmith Mine will increase by approximately 57,000 m<sup>3</sup> (unbulked). This equates to approximately 65,550 m<sup>3</sup> bulked excavated material.

Estimated excavation volumes under the s73 scheme incorporated a range, to reflect uncertainty regarding the width of the proposed shafts. Shaft diameters were predicted to be between 6.5m and 8.5m. It remains the case that precise shaft diameters are yet to be fully resolved. However, we would advise that current plans involve adopting a shaft diameter of around 6.7 metres, suggesting that the lower estimates of excavation material predicted in the s73 submission are more likely. Table 1, therefore provides a review of excavated volumes at Woodsmith Mine, from the original approved scheme; the s73 scheme; and the proposed s96A scheme.

Table 1 Total excavated material to be retained on-site (excluding Hailite, Product/Non Product Grade Polyhalite and Non-hazardous low/high pollution material) as a result of Proposed S96A Changes

	Original Scheme (2014 - SEI Rev 8)	Approved Scheme (s73 Scheme)		Proposed Scheme (s96A Scheme)	
		Min. Shaft (6.5m Diameter)	Max. Shaft (9.5m Diameter)	Min. Shaft (6.5m Diameter)	Max. Shaft (9.5m Diameter)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,230,477</b>	<b>853,285</b>	<b>967,760</b>	<b>918,835</b>	<b>1,033,310</b>

The excavated material arising from the creation of the new ventilation shaft etc. would be accommodated within the permitted parameters of Bund C. All other bunds would remain unchanged. Bund C was always designed as a 'balancing area' to accommodate a potential range of excavated material, and it is noted that it performs no particular landscape or screening function.

## **Application Submission**

The application was submitted via the planning portal (reference PP-07137238) and comprises the following documentation:

- Completed application form;
- Proposed Mine and MTS Subsurface Structures – Vent Shaft Detail (drawing ref. 40-SMP-WS-1400-PA-31-00001)

*N.B. The above drawing should be read in conjunction with drawing ref. 1000-ENV-DFS-DWG-005 that was approved as part of the parent, S73 permission (NYM/2017/0505/MEIA).*

The requisite planning application fee of £234.00 has been paid online.

## **Effects of Proposed Changes**

As referenced above, the proposed amendment to the Woodsmith Mine site is largely restricted to below-ground works, reinstating the ventilation shaft that formed part of the originally approved scheme. No new buildings or amendments to buildings are proposed, with the required ventilation equipment stored both within the approved ventilation equipment building and within underground chambers beneath this building. Only the required adjustments to the height and profile of Bund C change the nature of the approved scheme above-ground. Given the limited role this Bund has in the landscaping strategy for the site, it is anticipated that this proposed change will not raise concerns.

We would also highlight that the relocation of the ventilation equipment from one underground chamber to another (i.e. from the service shaft headframe chamber to the chamber sitting above the reinstated ventilation shaft) does not give rise to any additional environmental impacts (i.e. noise, ground conditions and impact on water resources) to that previously assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessments previously submitted.

We trust this submission provides you with sufficient information to consider this request for a non-material amendment to the approved scheme at Woodsmith Mine. However, should you have any further information requirements, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

**James Cox**  
Senior Planner