

4th August 2006

**Ian Fullilove
Policy Strategy and Partnerships
Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House
Bakewell, Derbyshire
DE45 1AE**

Dear Mr Fullilove

Help Shape the Future

Our attention was drawn only last week to this June 2006 consultation draft as we have been specifically mentioned in Part 2 pages 36 and 37. (*Mineral Extraction.....14.6 Various measures could achieve a gradual reduction of the cumulative impact of mineral activity in the National Park. These could include:- Full recognition by the British Aggregates Association (BAA) of the changing nature of National and Regional policy on mineral extraction in National Parks and the adoption by the BAA of a plan similar to that already adopted by the Quarry Products Association.....*)

The British Aggregates Association (BAA) represents the interests of some 70 members of which 50 are independent and privately-owned SME quarry companies throughout the UK with some 10% of national output and who operate from over 100 sites. We are part of the consultation and lobbying process both in the UK and Europe – and are also represented through the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) and CPA (Construction Products Association).

Contrary to your comment in the draft, BAA **fully** recognises the changing nature of national and regional policy on mineral extraction in national parks and this needs correcting in your final version. As your officers are well aware we meet, consult and discuss matters on a regular basis with the Planning Officers Society, and most recently were actively involved with them and other stakeholders in the consultation on MPS1 and the annexes. In addition, we are very much part of the ongoing exercise with the CBI Minerals Group to raise national awareness of the essentiality of the minerals industry to the long term needs, sustainability, prosperity and success of the UK as a whole and all its citizens. We do not have any “plans” as such over and above those detailed in national guidance documents; but we do encourage all our members to be proactive, responsible, professional and transparent with local communities; and with national and regional authorities.

Our policy on minerals activity in national parks differs from that of the QPA as our members are not large national organisations. For example, by having so called “no go” areas it could be construed as another way of reducing competition from the

smaller operators in a similar way that the corner shop has been gradually squeezed out of existence by the multinational retail outlets often to the detriment of rural communities.

We are at a loss to understand why you appear to be so against our industry in the Peak District. Mining and mineral extraction is, and always has been, very much part of the economy, culture, heritage and character of the Peak Park – and as you have noted many of its attractions and best features are as a direct result of this activity – as it is nationally in other national parks and special areas. This is an essential feature and needs to be recognised as a vital and integral part of the future. Over a third of SSIs nationally are a direct result of quarrying activity, and many sites are now the natural habitat for many of the country's protected species of wild birds - it is these very aspects that give our national parks such a diverse environmental heritage.

The UK is rich in mineral resources but these are being progressively sterilised by over-zealous planning regimes, red tape, stealth taxes and lack of expertise. Our operating standards are the highest of anywhere in the world and importing raw materials creates more overall global environmental damage and personal injury – over 6,000 Chinese are killed each year in mining accidents in their country! A global perspective is required and local nimbyism must be discouraged as this is selfish and short-sighted. If the extraction of local minerals does not continue then this increases the transportation of minerals and finished products ever greater distances with proportionately increased overall global environmental damage. In addition, if the extraction of building stone were to cease within the Peak Park it would be difficult or impossible for those constructing or renovating buildings to use local materials as required in their planning permissions and in local policies.

The minerals industry not only brings local employment both directly and indirectly, it also reduces road transport, meets national strategic needs, and represents the best environmental option. This will need a continued high level of trust, mutual respect and working together by industry with the community; and with the local, regional and national authorities. We also seek a truly Living Landscape.

On a personal level I have lived, and worked in the minerals industry, in the Peak Park for nearly 30 years, and am exceptionally proud of our industry's achievements. I have been closely associated with many local community activities and have never encountered the negative comments on minerals as expressed in your draft document. The concerns I hear are much more focussed on the increasing cross-park heavy traffic, and the behaviour of the tourist and tripper influx.

If you need any further information or discuss anything on BAA policies on environmental issues please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Peter Huxtable
MA(Cantab), CEng, FIMMM, FIQ