Proposed reopening of Collyweston Slate Mine

Planning Application

Design and Access Statement

Report prepared for

Claude N Smith Ltd.
Slaters Drift Industrial Estate
Collyweston
Northamptonshire
PE9 3PG

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1. Summary

1.1 The site will be accessed off Slate Drift road a no through road off the main A43 road running south of Collyweston village. The site is a small industrial estate comprising small units and workshops with regular vehicle and person movement throughout. The mining operations will involve underground extraction of stone ("Collyweston Slates") from a thin seam by mechanical equipment. Subsequent processing will involve exposing the stone blocks to winter weather for one or two seasons to enhance natural fissures. Then, skilled workers will split the blocks by hand into the characteristic roofing "Slates".

1.2 Work to produce Collyweston Slate has occurred in the village for approximately 400 years. This was originally carried out on an ad-hoc basis by shallow quarrying in the fields surrounding the village. About 200 years ago, as the shallow deposits were exhausted, approximately 10 adjacent plots of land on a new road called "Slaters Drift" were let or sold specifically for mining deeper rock by dedicated mines. These appear to have been quarries initially, with most switching to underground mining in the mid-1800s.

1.3 The mine on the application site appears to date from around 1850 and was active until the 1960s.

1.4 The mine workings will be entirely underground, there will be no increase in noise, dust or environmental impact from the works. The potential impact on the local bat population will be mitigated as part of the works.

1.5 There will be no increased activity of HGVs as a result of the mine reopening.

1.6 A bund surrounding the proposed access adit and stone storage area will prevent any visual impact from the works.

1.7 No additional access routes to the mine are required other than the present access to Claude N Smith Limited’s yard.

1.8 The mine access area (adit) has been designed to provide viable access for the construction and operation of the mine. An area adjacent to the mine adit is required for the storage of the limestone blocks which form the Collyweston Slates. The mine adit area will be enclosed by bunds to protect visual amenity and these will be planted with trees and shrubs.

1.9 The mine shaft will be emergency access area, this surrounded by industrial units, these will remain in place.
SECTION 2

MINE WORKING AND SAFETY STATEMENT