



# Friends of Ringwood Forest

## Press Release: HCC's Selective Memory Challenged by Verwood Town Council

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Dated: 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012

### HCC's Selective Memory Challenged by Verwood Town Council

On 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and much to the consternation and anger of local residents and the No2Purplehaze campaign team, Hampshire County Council (HCC) voted to keep the proposed Purple Haze site in their draft Minerals & Waste Plan.

During the course of the debate it was noted that the soft sand extraction from Purple Haze would reduce by 50% during the Plan period, enabling the site boundary to be moved 800 metres away from Verwood. People left the meeting believing the boundary would be altered and this understanding was then reported in the Press.

However – when HCC's Submission Report to the Planning Inspectorate was published following last year's Soundness Consultation it did NOT include the expected boundary change.

When challenged to explain the reasons for not changing the boundary, HCC stated via a press comment that it was never their intention to re-draw the boundary as it afforded the site, and Ebblake Bog – an internationally recognised RAMSAR/SSSi site, greatest protection. Friends of Ringwood Forest do not agree, believing this approach simply leaves the site open to later and full exploitation. Verwood Town Council was lobbied to help rebut HCC's statements.

Verwood Town Council, at its April 2012 meeting, agreed that HCC should be challenged and have subsequently written to HCC. The complete text of Verwood Town Council's challenge, which is fully supported by the campaign team, is included here:

<http://www.no2purplehaze.co.uk/Documents/Newsletters/VTCchallengesHCConPHboundary.pdf>

Friends of Ringwood Forest welcomes and supports the action taken by Verwood Town Council to challenge HCC's selective memory and now eagerly awaits HCC's response.

#### Additional information for editors:

- Friends of Ringwood Forest (FoRF) is the umbrella group with over 2,600 members which runs the No to Purple Haze campaign.
- Purple Haze is a 70 Hectare site linked with Moors Valley Country Park in terms of bike trails, orienteering courses and footpaths. The land is owned by the Somerley Estate and leased to the Forestry Commission. Hampshire County Council's proposal is to turn this site into a quarry and landfill site.
- Verwood Town Council contact for background/quotes: Cllr Spencer Flower, who is also Leader of East Dorset District Council email: [spencerflower@btinternet.com](mailto:spencerflower@btinternet.com)
- Friends of Ringwood Forest Chair for quotes: Sarah Sumner email: [sarahno2ph@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:sarahno2ph@hotmail.co.uk) tel: 01202 828953



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- Related Echo story:  
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- HCC's submission to the Secretary of State/Planning Inspectorate is located at  
<http://consult.hants.gov.uk/portal>
- For more information about the campaign please visit [www.no2purplehaze.co.uk](http://www.no2purplehaze.co.uk)
- Any pictures available directly from the above website may be used in press publications
- Any queries regarding this press release can be made to the Campaign Office at [info@forf.org.uk](mailto:info@forf.org.uk)

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