



Daisy Cooper MP

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Ref: DC21064

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Application Reference: PL/0232/21

Land at the former Hatfield Aerodrome, Hatfield Road, Smallford, AL4 0HP

Re: Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Section 78 Appeal by Brett Aggregates Ltd

Objection to variation of public access arrangements to Ellenbrook Park

I am writing as Member of Parliament for St Albans, further to my objections in November 2021, January 2023, and August 2024 to the various applications and appeals by Brett Aggregates to initiate quarrying at this site.

As I have outlined in my previous objections, I am deeply concerned about the potential for hazardous air pollution, the increased pressure on the unsuitable local road network as a result of additional HGV traffic, and the proximity of this site to the largest known bromate contamination plume in Europe. I regret that these important issues have been disregarded by the Secretary of State, but note that there remains concern over the long term access for the public to Ellenbrook Country Park. As the Secretary of State will know, this guarantee of much needed amenity and a site for biodiversity was a key condition of the original agreement established at the end of previous quarrying activity in the area in 2000.

I am relieved that the Planning Inspector and Secretary of State have recognised that the proposals in the appeal from Brett Aggregates to allow access are wholly unsatisfactory, and would result in an unacceptable loss of amenity to the local communities.

However, the most recent variations to the Public Access Strategy, proposed by the appellant, continue to fall well short of the test set for the routes across the park to be “attractive and unfettered”.

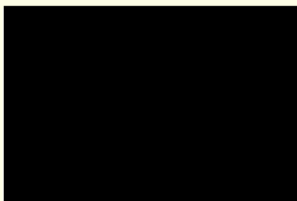
The plans would mean closing the existing route across the park, which is currently accessible for bikes, wheelchair users and those with limited mobility. This established route also provides a clear view of the park for these members of our community, and is usable even in periods of wet weather. The alternative proposed by the appellants would see more than half of this route blocked, with narrow gravel and grass paths instead. These would be inaccessible to most users of the park during wet periods, especially cyclists - and

entirely unusable to many park users with disabilities all year round. In addition, large portions of the route are to be behind a constructed bund, blocking the clear line of sight to the park and road making the access route much less safe.

The new access plans for access would also mean footpaths sited directly next to quarry workings, which would exacerbate the health hazards from particulate pollution to park users and increase the risk of accidents. I understand there would be a number of heavy vehicle crossing points along the path, which does not align with the requirement for attractive or unfettered access to the country park.

In conclusion, it is my view that the variation in the plans continue to fall short of the requirement for the public to continue to be able to use the cherished Ellenbrook Country Park, and urge the Secretary of State to reject the appeal on this basis.

Yours sincerely,



Daisy Cooper MP
Member of Parliament for St Albans