

Speech by UH postgraduate planning -Student Irriyah Solomon

for the Public Inquiry -for the Brett Quarry (second application) on Hatfield Aerodrome Site (Ellenbrook Fields) .

Good morning Inspector ,

I am speaking today as a student of the University of Hertfordshire, representing UH students who will be affected by the building of this quarry in Ellenbrook Fields. I am the Student representative for the Postgraduate Course on “Sustainable Planning “.

We are deeply concerned about the proposed quarry at Hatfield Aerodrome. This development on the land right next to the De Havilland campus , has serious implications for the health, safety, and well-being of students, residents, and the environment in Hatfield.

Here are the main points I'd like to raise:

1) Impact on Students using the University Sports Fields

- The university's sports field is located right next to the proposed quarry. Students play football and Rugby there -and smaller children (aged 11-18) have school football training sessions there. In exercising and training ,taking deep breaths they will be exposed to harmful ****silica dust**** from sand and gravel stockpiles , and to ***PM2.5 particles*** From the passing of diesel lorries , both of these air pollutants are known to damage lungs and can cause long-term health issues for young people .

Over 2,000 students live in halls of residence very near the site, and many more live in HMOs closeby in Salisbury village . These students will face daily exposure to dust and air pollution, which could lead to respiratory illnesses, exacerbate asthma and could even cause coronary heart disease.

2) Impact on Local Residents

- The site is surrounded by three large housing estates—Ellenbrook, Salisbury Village, and Smallford—home to over 5,000 residents, including families with children.

Diesel fumes from ****184 HGV movements a day**** will worsen air quality, increasing the risk of heart and lung diseases, especially for vulnerable groups like the elderly (living on St Albans Road West) and children walking to Howe dell school (in the Runway in Salisbury village) from the Ellenbrook estate

3) Traffic Congestion and Safety Risks

- The ****A1057 road**** (St Albans Rd West) already suffers from heavy congestion. Adding extra lorries and the pedestrian crossing near the blind bend, will make it even more dangerous for commuters and pedestrians, especially during foggy or busy times.

- Children walking to school or residents traveling during rush hour will face increased risks of accidents from lorries entering and exiting the quarry.

4) Environmental Concerns

- The **bromate plume**, Europe's worst groundwater contamination, lies beneath this site (Ellenbrook fields) . Any disturbance caused by quarrying could spread this cancer-causing pollutant dissolved in the groundwater ,into Hatfield's clean aquifer nearby ,supplying residents with drinking water supply, putting thousands at risk.

- Approving this quarry would TEST the **Environment Agency (EA) policies**, which strictly prohibit activities that could INTERFERE WITH THE REMEDIATION OF The PLUME , AND COULD exacerbate groundwater contamination. Allowing quarrying on this site would directly conflict with the "precautionary principle ", when there is another more suitable sustainable site for quarrying, now named in the emerging mineral plan . It could use canal transport and is close to the A414.

It would seem unwise and disproportionate to pursue this quarry, in residential Hatfield, when sufficient sand and gravel for the County, can be obtained from sites near Olive Farm , Stansted Abbots in East Herts : Given a high likelihood of bromate mobilisation, and the potential for catastrophic water pollution.

5) Loss of Community Green Space

- Ellenbrook Fields is Hatfield's first public park and is used by the community for exercise, dog walking, and events like the weekly **Park Run**, when 300 local people used to take part . Losing this green space would be a huge blow to local residents' quality of life and mental health. It is also the essential green belt division between St albans and Hatfield

6) What's the Alternative?

There is a safer and more suitable quarry site available at Briggens Estate in East Hertfordshire:

- No contamination risk from bromate.

- Located away from residential areas. Sustainable Canal transport (complying with the County Sustainability plan) reducing need for fossil fuel transport (Save our planet-please)

- Larger sand and gravel yield—10.2 million tonnes compared to 8 million tonnes at Ellenbrook, and possible further supply as the resources are available in that locality .

In conclusion, approving this quarry would harm residents, and the environment. With a safer alternative available, I urge the rejection of this proposal and to prioritise the health, safety, and well-being of the Hatfield community in line with sustainable principles and to allow this land to be used for remediation of the bromate plume for the benefit of our future water supplies .

Thank you for listening. Let's work together to protect Hatfield's future and work more sustainably .