

COLNEY HEATH GROUP

Third-Party Statement Against Proposed Quarry Development on Highways and Transport Impact

Submitted to the Appeal at the request of the Inspector reference APP/M1900/W/24/3346607, Land at former Hatfield Aerodrome.

1. Hatfield Quarry's Unsustainable Location

The proposed quarry at Hatfield is in an unsustainable location, as it lacks access to rail or water transport options, relying entirely on road transport by lorries. This is in direct conflict with Minerals Policy 16 of the *Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan*, which favours non-road transport options for mineral sites and mandates a rigorous assessment of the traffic and environmental impact of heavy goods vehicle (HGV) movements.

Given Hertfordshire's planned growth, especially in East Herts, mineral sites should ideally be located closer to anticipated demand. The proposed site, however, is far from East Hertfordshire, thus failing to support sustainable transport objectives. This would increase transport mileage and associated CO2 emissions, contradicting Hertfordshire County Council's (HCC) climate goals.

2. Routes for Accessing and Departing the Site

The quarry's location near St Albans and within its 7.5-ton vehicle restriction zone presents challenges for safe and compliant HGV routing. Proposed routes for site traffic include the A1057 St Albans Road towards Hatfield and Comet Way (A1001) to the A1(M) and A414, with the following key concerns:

- Environmental Impact on residential roads: Routes west of the site, such as Hatfield Road (A1057) and Sandpit Lane, pass through densely populated residential areas. Any increase in HGV traffic on these roads could adversely impact residents' quality of life and road safety.
- Restricted Access Compliance: Draft planning conditions stipulate that all HGVs must exit the site only in the eastbound direction on the A1057. However, there are no equivalent restrictions stating access to the site must only be from the east and thus westbound traffic, with no access allowed for eastbound traffic. Such a lack of entry restriction means that traffic will approach the site from the west via the residential areas of Smallford and St Albans. Residents also have concerns about access being attempted via Station Road Smallford via the bridge which has weight restrictions and a bend on the top..

3. A1057 St Albans Road Traffic Impact

The A1057 already accommodates significant HGV traffic from the nearby Hatfield Quarry, with 250 HGV movements per day. The addition of the new quarry traffic would add 154 daily movements, raising the potential total to over 400 HGV movements. This would likely worsen congestion, especially during peak hours.

No consideration has been given to the traffic which already uses the road servicing the industrial area further along Hatfield Road towards St Albans and Glinwells nursery which is substantial.

Moreover, recent traffic models and local reports (such as the *Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan* and the *HCC A414 Corridor Strategy*) highlight capacity issues and delays along this route, which could be exacerbated by quarry traffic. Although some mitigation is proposed, such as signalisation and road expansions, the infrastructure improvements would still fall short of addressing peak-time congestion, thus straining local roads and inconveniencing residents.

It should be noted that should there be any problems on the local motorway network i.e. the A1(M), M1, A414 and the M25 traffic diverts via St Albans onto the local road network creating problems and once again no consideration has been given to this issue.

We also have concerns that as we have highlighted elsewhere the number of lorry movements is substantially underestimated and as such the impact on highways has been under reported as it has been based on flawed data. This issue must be addressed.

4. Comet Way (A1001) and Connectivity to Major Road Network

The only realistic connections to major highways from the quarry are via the A1057 and Comet Way, linking to the A1(M) and A414. Yet, assessments have not fully addressed the potential traffic impact beyond these points.

Traffic modelling in the *Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan* already forecasts delays at Comet Way and its connecting junctions, especially during AM and PM peak times. Mitigation proposals, such as lane extensions and signal optimisation, may partially alleviate delays but are unlikely to prevent congestion fully with added quarry traffic. Thus, without expanded mitigation, the existing network will struggle to accommodate the increased demand without detrimental effects on traffic flow and local residents.

5. Conclusion

The proposed quarry's reliance on road transport, its distance from the projected areas of growth, its poor alignment with sustainable transport policy, and the existing capacity constraints on local highways render it an unsustainable choice for mineral extraction. Not only does it fail to meet *Minerals Policy 16* due to its lack of non-road transport options, but it also risks overwhelming the already congested local road network, with negative impacts on local communities and environmental goals. Therefore, alternative, more accessible sites with better transport options should be considered to ensure sustainable mineral transport and to minimise highway and environmental impact.