

11th March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/M1900/W/24/334607
Land at the former Hatfield Aerodrome.

I wish to object to the proposed quarry development at Hatfield Aerodrome.

May I begin by stating that I do not believe the consultation for the reopened enquiry to be fair or legal. There are no site notices on the aerodrome advertising the reopened enquiry and I have seen nothing in the local press. I walk on the airfield on most days, and no one that I have spoken to is aware that the enquiry is happening or that comments can be submitted. This is denying them a platform to submit any views they may have.

Having read the document "Public Access Strategy for Ellenbrook Fields Mineral Working Proposal February 2026" produced by Brett I would like to make the following comments

- The brochure states that Brett has consulted with local communities, as a local resident, I am not aware of any such consultation and would welcome evidence from Brett about how this consultation has taken place.
- The continued inclusion of the two lagoons and the failure of Brett to change the location of the lagoons, blocks access across the park and reduces the west- east access by creating bottlenecks and restricts free and unfettered movement and access from west to east
- It is proposed to remove a large part of the old concrete taxi way, we frequently take our grandchildren to the park and we always use this route when we visit with them. The site is very wet and during the wetter months this route is invaluable for taking pushchairs onto the site. It is also invaluable for those people with limited mobility who are reliant on wheelchairs.
- One of the reasons that the park is so attractive is the number of routes that you can take from west to east, you can roam anywhere that you like, choosing grass paths, or hardstanding paths when the area is wetter. The proposed path system will restrict movement according to the bund layout and road crossing points reducing choice. Looking at the plans, lots of the paths will be grass and will be unusable in the winter months, this problem will be exacerbated as everyone will be channelled down the same routes. Currently routes can be varied daily allowing unfettered and attractive access, this will be substantially reduced as park users will be funnelled into the same reduced route options.



Photos taken on site on 10/3/26. They show how muddy the paths get, this problem will be exacerbated if multiple users are directed along the same limited routes. The photo on the left is near the wooded area and is one of the cross site routes proposed by Brett. It floods here every year and becomes impassable. The level of water has dropped considerably during the last week due to the recent drier and sunnier conditions.

- The booklet states that 85% of the park will be accessible throughout the proposed project. This is misleading and I would question this percentage due to the continual presence taken by the plant site, internal roads, bunds and lagoons. It also fails to take into account the ongoing location changes of perimeter seals and bunds which will also limit public access. These change of access restrictions are not fully explained in the booklet. The figure should relate to the percentage of the quarrying area site that is accessible, not the whole of Ellenbrook Fields.
- The bunds and perimeter seals will ensure that walking on the park will not be visually attractive, the routes taken will also have to include long diversions around the lagoons and it will be difficult to enjoy a circular walk. It is not clear from the plans how the construction of new perimeter seals will be safely achieved without further access restrictions not shown on the plan
- The bunds that appear during phase changes will apparently be constructed using material excavated from previous phases – there is no plan that shows how this material will be transported here, which presumably means that between phases either there will be less public access than shown as the area will need to be fenced off for safety, or the public will be put at danger as new bunds are constructed. Construction of these bunds will also result in considerable noise pollution for visitors to the park and potential silica inhalation, not contributing to a particularly attractive leisure venue.
- The brochure states that there is currently only one track in the proposed lagoon areas, I would dispute this as there is currently free access in this area. They refer to the livestock fencing omitting free access, however they fail to take note of the

kissing gates located on the livestock fencing allowing additional access across the livestock areas .

- During phase 2 and the transition to phase 3, access from east to west is severely compromised, with long diversions required to move across the site.
- It is not clear how footpaths will be constructed where they are shown crossing bunds, either there will be a passage across, negating the purpose of the bund, or people will have to cross over the bund – impossible for the young, elderly or those with mobility issues.
- It is ironic that the brochure contains pictures of horse riders. The three proposed new bridleways will be unusable by those on horseback as they will have to negotiate crossing points for the access roads to cross the site. This will be impossible as horses will not be able to physically access refuge areas at the road crossing points. In addition it would not be safe for horses to be ridden near industrial machinery or alongside to the plant site. With 174 proposed traffic movements per day in addition to heavy plant machinery carrying out excavation and haulage, the noises would unsettle most horses making the site a no go area. It would also put pedestrian users and dog walkers of the park in danger having to pass horses in close proximity.
- The number of proposed crossing points for members of the public shown in the access strategy are quite clearly hazardous, e.g. in the first phase there are 6 such crossing points. The proposed safety control measures at the crossing points do not appear to mitigate the risks, they restrict movement across the park, and will be difficult for people with pushchairs or cyclists to negotiate. According to the HSE Website transport accounts for 40% of all accidents in quarries and 60% of deaths, yet the proposal is for park users to come into frequent contact with industrial vehicles.
- The design of the crossing points with refuge areas appears to put the onus on park users to take responsibility for safety. As this is a risk introduced to the park by Brett, the onus should be on the quarry operatives to ensure safety and pedestrians and users of the park should have priority to use the crossing points as opposed to vehicles. There should be restrictions placed on vehicles crossing the access points and they should have to stop for pedestrians, not the other way around.
- It cannot be guaranteed that the drivers of vehicles on site will have 100% vision around their vehicles, again putting members of the public at risk.
- Given the large number of transport movements each day, it is inevitable that some of the haulage drivers will be unfamiliar with the site and the proximity of members of the public, therefore increasing the risk.
- We regularly see individuals with learning difficulties accessing the park independently. Currently they can use the park safely, however they may not have

to capacity to keep themselves safe with the proposed access strategy at crossing points. The constant re-routing of paths may be distressing for anyone with mental health issues who often find routine reassuring, this is therefore not inclusive

- Excavators with decibel levels of 113db will be working in proximity of leisure users, any sounds over 70 decibels can damage hearing, again this does not contribute to an attractive leisure venue
- The Health and Safety Executive note that haulage roads in quarries pose significant risks of exposure to silica and have produced a COSHH assessment to reduce the risk. The HSE advise that cab drivers stay in ventilated cabs, however in the Hatfield Aerodrome application, the public are actively routed across these roads. The Brett access strategy directs the public across internal haulage routes and next to areas being quarried – therefore the public are actively being directed into areas putting them at high risk of silica exposure. Employees at the quarry will be protected by H & S legislation relating to working procedures and will benefit from protective personal equipment. Local residents and park users will be afforded none of this protection.
- The brochure says that there will be “ Increased walking routes and dedicated bridleways across Ellenbrook Fields at all times” This is quite clearly false information. Currently you can walk freely, anywhere on the aerodrome site. If the quarry goes ahead, there will be a permanent plant site, lagoons, internal haul roads, bunds and perimeter seals and areas being quarried which will all limit and reduce the current access. Quite clearly the statement from Brett is incorrect.
- The proposed access plan is not in line with the government “Access to Green and Blue Space in England” or Natural England’s Green Infrastructure Framework. This includes free public access, biodiversity support and suitability for recreation to improve physical and mental health. It includes multifunctionality supporting diverse needs and physical activity alongside ecological benefits along well connected safe active routes. Being channelled along a restricted muddy path, bordered on one side by a busy road, and on the other side a high bund and quarry working is not conducive to wellbeing and is hardly an attractive place for recreation.
- The needs of local wildlife have also been ignored. There are significant numbers of muntjac and roe deer that by their migratory nature move freely across the site daily. The bunds and fences will prevent this movement and force them to find other routes, potentially along roads bordering the site with the potential for collisions with vehicles.

In conclusion, the proposed access plan will severely limit public access to the area for an extended period of over 30 years. It does not provide for unfettered public access to the maximum possible areas of the park and routes will not be attractive to users of the park and delivered to a high standard.

The failure of Brett to change the positioning of the lagoons as advised by the planning inspector will indeed result in a failure to integrate the restored phase into the unaffected

part of Ellenbrook Country Park in a timely manner, meaning, as pointed out that when the worked out areas to the west are restored, it won't be possible to integrate them to the unaffected area of the park until the quarry is in the final stages of restoration.

For the reasons stated above, the proposed scheme definitely does not strike a balance between maximising the use of mineral resources and protecting the amenity of residents and users of the park.

The siting of the proposed lagoons prevents attractive unfettered access from east to west, and the new access strategy is not inherently different from the previous version.

I would urge you to refuse permission for this application. If permission is given it will be a sad day for democracy as the revised plans clearly do not meet the required criteria as set out by the planning inspectors report.

It may be that in the current climate, the national requirement for sand and gravel is of high priority, however any mineral extraction plans must meet legal planning requirements, and in their current format the plans submitted by Brett do not appear to do so.

Your sincerely

Caroline Churchill

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