

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Joanna Vincent](#)
Subject: Hatfield Aerodrome Quarry Application
Date: 25 February 2026 17:01:04

FORMAL OBJECTION – PROPOSED QUARRY DEVELOPMENT

Location:
Hatfield Aerodrome

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to formally and unequivocally object to the proposed quarry development at Hatfield Aerodrome

Impact on Hatfield Aerodrome – Aviation Safety & Safeguarding Concerns

The proposed quarry's proximity to [Hatfield Aerodrome](#) raises serious aviation safety concerns that have not been adequately addressed.

Under UK planning policy, local authorities are required to consult aerodrome operators and consider safeguarding impacts where development may affect aviation safety. The [Civil Aviation Authority](#) (CAA) and national aviation safeguarding guidance recognise several specific risk factors relevant to quarrying operations:

- Airborne dust and particulate matter can affect visibility, aircraft performance, and pilot safety during take-off and landing phases.**
- Blasting vibration and air overpressure (if applicable) may pose operational risks depending on proximity and frequency.**
- Changes to bird habitats caused by excavation, water pooling, or disturbed land can alter bird behaviour and increase the risk of bird strikes — a well-documented aviation hazard.**
- Creation of open water bodies (even temporary) can attract large bird populations, directly conflicting with aviation safeguarding principles.**
- Increased HGV traffic on routes serving aerodrome access corridors may compound safety risks and congestion in an already sensitive transport network.**

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that development should not create unacceptable safety risks. Aviation safeguarding is a material planning consideration. Any development that increases the likelihood of bird strike risk, visibility impairment, or operational interference must be subject to rigorous scrutiny.

Given the scale of quarry activity proposed, the cumulative risks to airspace safety,

ground operations, and associated infrastructure are significant and foreseeable.

In the absence of comprehensive, independently verified aviation impact assessments — and explicit confirmation of no objection from aerodrome safeguarding authorities — this proposal cannot be considered safe.

This proposal presents serious and unacceptable risks to public safety, groundwater protection, residential amenity, biodiversity, and the integrity of the Green Belt.

1. HIGHWAY SAFETY – UNSUITABLE RURAL ROAD NETWORK

Hatfield, St Albans

Smallford is already heavily congested and Smallford is accessed via narrow, already congested roads, including routes connecting to the A414 and local lanes that:

- **Lack safe pedestrian infrastructure**
- **Contain residential frontages close to the carriageway**
- **Already experience congestion and HGV movements**

Introducing regular quarry HGV traffic would:

- **Create significant collision risk to pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and school traffic**
- **Increase danger at junctions not designed for industrial freight**
- **Impede emergency vehicle access**
- **Accelerate structural deterioration of local roads**

Under the Highways Act 1980, development must not create unsafe highway conditions. This proposal demonstrably fails that test.

2. GREEN BELT PROTECTION

Smallford sits within designated Green Belt land.

Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- **Inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful.**
- **Very special circumstances must clearly outweigh that harm.**

A quarry is a major industrial operation involving excavation, plant machinery, processing, stockpiling and haulage. The industrialisation of Green Belt land fundamentally conflicts with its purpose:

- To prevent urban sprawl
- To safeguard countryside from encroachment
- To preserve openness

Temporary extraction does not eliminate long-term landscape scarring or ecological loss.

3. RISK TO GROUNDWATER & DRINKING WATER

Hertfordshire is heavily reliant on chalk aquifers for drinking water.

Quarry excavation in this geological context poses risks including:

- Interference with groundwater flow
- Lowering of the water table
- Sediment contamination
- Hydrocarbon leakage from machinery
- Runoff into nearby watercourses

Under the Water Resources Act 1991 and Environmental Protection Act 1990, safeguarding water supplies is a legal obligation.

Once groundwater is contaminated, remediation is complex, costly, and sometimes impossible.

Residents have a legal right to protection of their home environment under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act.

The precautionary principle must apply.

4. NOISE IMPACT & HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Quarrying generates:

- Continuous heavy plant operation
- Crushing and screening noise
- HGV reversing alarms
- Engine braking
- Potential blasting vibration

Chronic exposure to industrial noise is associated with:

- **Sleep disturbance**
- **Cardiovascular strain**
- **Elevated stress levels**
- **Reduced quality of life**

Smallford is not an industrial estate. It is a residential and semi-rural community. The character of the area would be permanently altered.

5. DUST & AIR QUALITY

Quarries produce fine particulate matter (PM10 and silica dust).

These particulates:

- **Aggravate asthma and respiratory illness**
- **Settle on homes, gardens and agricultural land**
- **Travel further than predicted in dry, windy conditions**

Hertfordshire already experiences pressure on air quality corridors. Additional industrial dust sources are inappropriate so close to homes.

6. BIODIVERSITY & HABITAT LOSS

The Smallford area supports:

- **Farmland birds**
- **Bats**
- **Protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981**
- **Biodiversity networks linked to surrounding countryside**

Quarry development results in:

- **Habitat fragmentation**
- **Noise disturbance**
- **Loss of foraging land**
- **Displacement of wildlife**

Replacement planting does not restore established ecosystems.

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, there is a statutory duty to conserve biodiversity.

7. PROPERTY DAMAGE & VIBRATION RISK

Heavy quarry traffic and potential blasting introduce vibration risks to:

- **Older residential properties**
- **Structural foundations**
- **Underground utilities**

Nationally, quarry operations have led to:

- **Structural cracking complaints**
- **Insurance disputes**
- **Long-term property devaluation**

Residents should not be placed in a position of pursuing costly civil claims after preventable harm.

8. CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON A COMMUNITY ALREADY UNDER STRAIN

Smallford and the wider St Albans area have experienced:

- **Ongoing development pressure**
- **Increased traffic density**
- **Infrastructure strain**

Planning policy requires consideration of cumulative impact. This proposal adds industrial burden to an already stretched local network.

CONCLUSION

This quarry would:

- **Industrialise protected countryside**
- **Endanger highway safety**
- **Threaten groundwater security**
- **Increase noise and dust pollution**
- **Harm biodiversity**
- **Reduce residential amenity**

- **Undermine Green Belt policy**

The harms are significant, foreseeable, and long-term.

The proposal fails to demonstrate that the benefits clearly outweigh the damage to residents and the environment.

I respectfully request that this application be refused.

**Yours faithfully,
Darlene Beavis**



Sent from my iPhone