

To Whom It May Concern,

I am once again writing to object to the Lea Castle Farm planning application.

Having listened remotely and in person to the inquiry so far, the legal proceedings feel a world away from the reality at the heart of this application.

My previous concerns have not changed, and my fears continue to deepen for this site and the communities who cherish it. It is disheartening to hear the site described to us by the appellant's 'expert' witnesses, who have not spent any considerable time there, and whose interest in this issue is purely monetary or academic.

We hear from the appellant's witnesses that our tourist economy is not significant, so it doesn't matter if it's lost. That our traffic levels are already too high, so it's acceptable to make them even higher. That the site already has road noise, and the added noise of a digger or HGV will make an insignificant difference. And that our heritage is already poorly preserved, so it's okay to (literally) fracture what is left of it.

We hear that because we are poor, we don't have much to lose, and so the harm is mitigated. Yet, this is *exactly* why this place is precious. We have everything to lose. The site's tranquility is fleeting. Its existence is tenuous. It is vulnerable. This is why we have to fight to protect it. We feel rich because we have this beautiful place that we are connected to and rooted in. I guess this is what is meant when talking about the 'heightened responsibility' of the greenbelt in this site. It is a fragile thing and it must be protected from harm.

We are told that NRS want to improve the heritage and biodiversity of this site. This is a convenient mistruth. If improvements to heritage and biodiversity were their true objective, they could do so without the desecration of the greenbelt. They are here to pillage the land for what they can gain.

We're shown the artists impressions of the restoration and we are asked to take them as fact, when they can only be considered a fiction at this moment. We are told that ten years is temporary. A decade is temporary to the far away planners who dream up these schemes, to the accountants who balance their books at the end of each financial year; to NRS who can continue to apply for extensions to their timeline.

A decade is not temporary to:

- Young people whose childhood would slip away before the site is restored
- Those who would spend their whole retirement looking at bunds instead of greenbelt
- The wildlife who call this site home
- The victims or fatalities of road traffic collisions from unsafe roads and pavements
- The local business owner who goes out of business
- Those with neurodivergence for whom change is unbearable
- Any resident who lives in fear here and now of the long term impacts of this plan

It is not temporary to me and my husband. We live 500 meters from the site, in the 'urban sprawl' of Kidderminster. Lea Castle is where we go when the world is too much, when we need to take a moment.

In fact, because of its openness, the Lea Castle Farm site is the only place locally that I feel safe as a woman walking or running alone. I could not say the same of a public right of way directly through or around a quarry. What a sad thing it would be to lose that freedom.

The weather is changing and my health is changing with it, as my asthma becomes more difficult to control. We've heard during this process that there's little evidence or no argument for the risk of harm from dust. If so, then why is it so easy to find so many frightening reports and research papers on this topic? How can there be any acceptable level of harm when it comes to breathing in and out?

This inquiry makes everything seem so complicated, when it should be extremely simple. This application is wrong. If this application is appropriate in law, then the law is wrong. There is no justification for the harm this proposal would cause. Please protect this place.

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