

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to formally submit my objection to the proposed sand and gravel quarry at Lea Castle Farm.

While I understand the importance of sourcing materials like sand and gravel, I am deeply concerned about the close proximity of this proposed facility to local communities and the widely used Public Rights of Way (PROW) network.

My objection stems from the impact this facility would have on nearby communities, including Cookley, Wolverley, Sion Hill, and Broadwaters, where many residents, schools, and recreational facilities would be affected. This area also includes vulnerable populations, such as young children and the elderly, who would be particularly susceptible to the facility's operations. My specific concerns are as follows:

- **Greenbelt:** Mineral quarrying disrupts the integrity and purpose of the greenbelt, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- **Air Quality:** The emission of potentially harmful particles from quarrying and the increased traffic of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) pose significant health risks to local residents and PROW users.
- **Health and Well-being:** Beyond physical health risks, the facility would negatively impact the mental and physical well-being of local residents by limiting access to essential green spaces and leisure routes.
- **Noise:** Noise pollution would result directly from quarrying activities and indirectly from increased HGV traffic.
- **Duration:** This project is not a short-term disruption; with an expected lifespan of 10–11 years plus the time required for restoration, it would impact the lives of local residents and families, including my own, for over a decade.
- **Infill:** I am concerned about the materials that will be used for infill, as they may have potential harmful effects.
- **Loss of Quality Agricultural Land:** During and after quarrying operations, it is uncertain whether this land will ever be restored to its current agricultural quality.
- **Wildlife and Habitat Loss:** The network of trees and hedgerows supports valuable wildlife. The cumulative loss of habitat, combined with nearby residential developments, is concerning, especially for red-list species like linnets and skylarks, and no suitable mitigation appears to be in place.
- **PROW Network:** This area's PROW network is frequently used by pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrian riders. I am concerned about the disruption to these routes and the exposure of users to noise and potentially harmful particles.

I respectfully request that the genuine concerns of local residents be carefully considered in the decision-making process. While I understand the need for clear policy-based grounds to refuse an application, I believe there are significant factors here that indicate this proposal does not align with relevant local and national policies.

The cumulative impacts on residents are likely to be severe, as defined by the NPPF. Although this is a temporary project, the extended duration of quarrying and restoration would cause prolonged disruption.

Kind regards,  
Jodie Dipaola-Smith.