

Lea Castle Quarry Appeal

I am saddened to learn at this late stage that previous objections have not been included in the 2nd enquiry to the Lea Castle Quarry application. I am therefore lodging my objections again.

The area of land is within a short walking distance of several schools, a nursing home and residential properties. Broadwaters, Wolverley & Cookley have a combined population of approximately 15,000 people who would be living within close proximity to the proposed quarry. All these people will suffer from increased levels of air pollution from increased mineral dust and exhaust emissions and the wider population of the Wyre Forest will be affected by increased traffic and poorer air quality. The air and noise pollution will be detrimental to the health and wellbeing to all residents and businesses. Poorer air quality will impact on those with respiratory, heart & bronchial problems and will no doubt add to the pressures on local GP surgeries. Should residents need a hospital admission, this will further exacerbate the challenges of the acute and community hospitals in the county.

I am also concerned about the risk of silicosis to the general population. Just because something is not known does not mean it is not a risk. The Coroner found road traffic pollution was the cause of death of a young girl in London for the first time last year.

The noise from the quarrying and the increased traffic (as estimated 140 HGV's per day in the application) will surely have a detrimental effect on the education of our children and the mental health of all. All residents and those in the nursing home will suffer from a reduction in the quality of life.

The safety of children walking to school along the A449 & B4189 is also called into question in view of the increased traffic. The road surface will be affected by the dirt & dust which will become mud in wet weather, and this will further add to the hazard along these roads. There is a decline down to the lights at the junction of the A449. The B4189 is unsuitable for the 140+ HGV journeys each day and this number of additional journeys will impact the journey times of the residents. This road is also a walking route for children going to school and is already a very busy road without the additional lorries. The pavement is very narrow in places and is quite frightening to walk along. The number of children walking to school will increase due to the new homes in Lea Castle Village.

The Wyre Forest local plan aims to encourage growth to the area and is currently planning new homes across the district to attract new residents. The Lea Castle Village has an additional 600 homes and there is currently an application being determined for a further 800 new dwellings and is across the A449 from the proposed quarry. Indeed, the proposed plans for new homes in the vicinity of the quarry would result in a quarry surrounded by the residential districts of Wolverley, Cookley, Broadwaters, Sion Hill and the new Lea Castle village. Hardly conducive to a peaceful and healthy lifestyle if not a direct deterrent to prospective buyers.

We are hearing daily of the health benefits of experiencing outdoor space and getting in touch with nature. The late Dr Michael Mosley extolled the benefit of walking in nature first thing every day and the quarry site enables local residents to do that without the need of a car. NHS advertisements also recommend outdoor space to ease mental health issues.

Should this enquiry find for the applicant green space that the local plan cites as important for the health & wellbeing of the population will be destroyed for years to come along with natural habitat for wildlife, hedgerows and protected trees.

I am also concerned that the loss of such a large area of the rural landscape will result in further flooding.

The Staffordshire & Worcestershire canal, tea rooms, mini golf, equestrian centre and the Camping & Caravan site are all within a few yards of the proposal and will all be adversely affected as the public will not choose to visit locations next to a quarry. Additionally, locals will travel out of the area to get away from the quarry also adding further road traffic and vehicle pollution and taking money out of the area.

The Heritage witness stated that the parkland will be improved after restoration. I have grave concerns that the land will ever be reinstated but trees can be planted without the need to digging a quarry first. Just plant the trees....something else that the world needs.

This proposal can only have a destructive effect on the landscape, flora, fauna, quality of life, health & well-being of all within the Wyre Forest and be very damaging to the prosperity of the district. There is only 1 person to benefit from the Quarry but 1000's who will suffer for years to come. I urge you to reject this appeal.

Karen Baldwin